2 December 1977 25p USA & Canada $1 By Air

NEW STATESMAN

CHRISTMAS BOOKS: 2

John Griffith on the Packer Judgment
Profile of Brian Clough

Roger Omond: South Africa Allan Ashbolt: Australia
John Mortimer: London Diary

James Fenton: Macaulay Russell Davies: Cartoons
Donald MacRae on Beveridge and Laski
Philip French on Disney Mark Kidel on Rock

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The Two Faces of Ian Smith

Ian Smith and his associates have always had a police mentality where African (or liberal/European) opposition is concerned. This week their police tactic has taken the 'hard man, soft man' form. In one tone of voice, wheedling and redolent of false bonhomie, they propose an 'internal settlement' with selected nationalist leaders, on the basis of the five-times broken promise to honour a universal suffrage agreement. In another tone, they snarl and swagger over the border to ravage an underdeveloped and virtually unprotected country as a sanctuary for guerrillas. Their own 'body count' on this occasion is self-evidently absurd, as they clearly did not stay long enough to verify whom exactly they had killed. The higher the claimed number of corpses, the more atrocious the possibilities seem. Anyway, the Rhodesians seem proud of their efforts. They may not have seen *The Times* front page report on the massacre, which used the word Zimbabweans, and added in an amazingly inaccurate bracket that the word meant 'Rhodesian nationalists', but they have certainly done a great deal to make the identification more credible.

During the phoney election which confirmed his 'mandate' last August, Mr Smith repeatedly and publicly announced his opposition to majority rule on the basis of one man one vote. His right-wing opponents felt that he was too ready to compromise on it even so, and that any such compromise would be the thin end of the wedge. They were probably right. If Mr Smith really is serious about a deal with the African majority, nobody need believe that it is because he likes the political leaders whom he kept in prison for so long. He would not talk to Muzorewa if he was not scared of Nkomo; would not conciliate the newly pacific Sithole if he was not apprehensive about the militant Mugabe. (The chiefs he has always owned anyway.) There is no incentive, then, for the guerrillas to give up when concessions are being made. They will not have borne the heat and burden of the day to see it stolen from them at the last.

It is, in any case, highly unlikely that Smith means what he says. His own power, and that of his farming-banking constituency, would not survive majority rule in any recognisable form, and he knows it. The furthest incursion made by reality into his stance is the recognition that UDI was probably a waste of effort – which anybody could have told him in 1965. His current mixture of guile at home and terror abroad is simply an effort to divide the nationalist camp and play for time. The tragedy is that he may succeed in the first endeavour if not the second. It is now possible to look beyond the chronicle of wasted time that has been the Smith period, and imagine an emergent Zimbabwe. It will be tragic if that emergence is scarred by a civil war and a period of revenge for the sins and compromises of the past. This may, on present form, be Smith's most lasting legacy (and one can already hear the Julian Amerys and Ronald Bells who will say that this proved him right all along).

It has to be hoped that post-Smith Rhodesia does not become another Angola or another Congo. Every day's delay in ridding Africa of his presence makes that outcome more likely. A few months ago, the Anglo-American proposals seemed to offer a new hope, and the chance that the West would back the right horse for a change. Now, with South Africa's windows frosting over, and a new settler reaction descending, nerve seems to have been lost. The British and American volte face at the United Nations on sanctions was one example. The current silence on Smith's latest manoeuvre is another. Long-suffering Africans still do not know what the British are really proposing, and they are certainly not about to go through another fiasco like the one laid on in Geneva last year. At the time of the Victoria Falls talks in August 1975, the NEW STATESMAN was sceptical about the chances of Mr Vorster emerging as a midwife to majority rule in Rhodesia or anywhere else. There is no great pleasure in having been proved right on that. There would be some satisfaction in knowing what the British Government proposes to do before its latest policy founders from inanition.

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Spotlight on Politics

James Fenton

Who are the Men of Destiny?

Eric Gairy, the Prime Minister of Grenada, has asked the United Nations to declare 1978 the International Year of Unidentified Flying Objects, and has asked for a department to be set up to coordinate research in this field. It is certainly an absorbing subject, and an unusual one. In most fields of inquiry, excitement increases as discoveries are made and appropriate explanations found. With UFOs, on the other hand, the aim of the research is to maintain the befuddlement of the mind; 'Eureka!' cries the UFO buff, 'I have discovered something I cannot explain.' The essence of the inquiry is that it should lead nowhere.

Political journalism is very similar. For instance, take the Liberal proposal for fixed-term parliaments. It seems rational enough – insanely rational, in comparison with one or two other Liberal proposals – and one might imagine that it would get a good press. But it does not, for the simple reason that, if there were fixed-term parliaments, all the men who earn their living by guessing the date of the next election would be out of a job. Catoptromancy, divination by mirrors, and lecanomancy, divination by examining dregs (the ancestor of telling fortunes from tealeaves), and many of the less savoury methods of divination are on the decline. But the art of telling when the Prime Minister is going to go to the country remains a jealously protected mystery. Political journalists behave in exactly the same manner as the high priests of the ancient mystery religions, binding each other by terrifying secret rules and initiation rites. I was not at all surprised, as I returned to the Ways and Means Corridors this week, when a jewelled dagger whizzed past my face, and buried itself, quivering, in the bookcase behind me; nor was it odd to find a gibbeted crow on my coathook, or a weasel's foot in my Guinness.

Mystery, in these affairs, is vital: the great political journalist, like the great oracles, must write in such a way that he cannot be faulted, whatever the event. The best story I have read in recent weeks was a front-page splash in the *Mirror*. Jeremy Thorpe may resign this weekend, said the story; *or on the other hand*, it went on emphatically, he may not! It takes a man with the occult powers of Terence Lancaster to pull off a feat of this kind. We call it, technically, a scoop.

The subject, then, at which I wish to take a learned and sober little squint this week, is the future leadership of the Labour Party, and in particular the line-up on the Right, the blue end of the spectrum. Suppose we went together, you, my hundred squillion readers, and I, to the cabinet room, and suppose we asked who wanted to lead the Labour Party, how many hands would shoot up, and in what order? The first, jumping up and down in his chair and saying, 'Sir, sir, please sir, please sir, me sir, sir can *I* be leader of the Labour Party, sir, it's not fair, sir, please, sir, sir!' would be Roy Hattersley. This would be followed by a terrible commotion from the direction of David Owen, a loud cry of protest from Denis Healey, a violent banging of the desk by Roy Mason, a slinging of ink-bombs by John Silkin and William Rodgers, a flood of tears from Shirley Williams, a tantrum from Eric Varley, and an agonised reappraisal from Merlyn Rees. The only two to remain with their hands quietly held above their heads would be Peter Shore and Tony Benn.

The reason for the comparative calm of these two senior boys is easy to see: they are not in competition for a particular route to the top. If the way they have chosen so far is the right one, they will win in the end. If not, *tant pis*. But the remainder of the candidates (I am deliberately underestimating Denis Healey, by the way – I can't help it) are rather crowding the course. To take the first two, Hattersley and Owen, it must surely be that any triumph for the one is a little death for the other.

Hattersley! Why is it that every time I think of Hattersley I am put into a good humour? Is it raining, is it cold, am I stuck late at night in the obscurest London suburb with no prospect of a bus, and is there a hole in my shoe – I think of Hattersley, and at once all my problems dissolve. A great purring taxi pulls up in my mind, and I am whisked off to a welcoming house and a blazing hearth. Crumpets and tea are set before me, and a favourite book – say, Hattersley's *Nelson* – is placed in my hands. Try it yourself. Try imagining a newscaster of the future reading the latest bulletin: 'World leaders converged on Chequers today, where they were the guests of the Prime Minister, Mr Roy Hattersley . . .' It sounds great, doesn't it? It's got a real twist at the end.

NEW STATESMAN
Vol 94 No 2437
Published weekly at Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ Tel: 01-405 8471
© 1977
The Statesman & Nation Publishing Co Ltd

Annual Subscription Rates

By surface mail	UK £12.50 Overseas £14 USA $30
By air mail	Europe £17.50 Middle East £19 Africa, India £20 USA, Canada $40 Australia, NZ, Far East £21

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And now try the same exercise with David Owen. The sentence sounds quite banal. There's no element of surprise. A country which chose Owen as PM would be pretty antiseptic. I have recently been asking MPs to give their sex appeal ratings of cabinet members (I am collating the results for a Nuffield project). Oddly enough, Owen rates much higher than Hattersley. Indeed, some sources give him nine out of ten. Why? I do not think it true that Owen is, objectively, sexy. It's merely that people *think* he's sexy. They imagine that other people find him sexy, and therefore they feel obliged to agree. My answer to these people is: have another look at his mouth. There's something suspicious about it, a touch of plastic surgery perhaps. It seems to have come from another male model altogether. It's not an offence against nature, like Peter Jay's prosthetic lower lip. But it does have an obstinate little life of its own.

Now, Hattersley by contrast is all of a piece. There is no distinction between appearance and reality. If Hattersley is hurt or annoyed or furiously jealous, he looks it. He is therefore much safer, politically, than Owen. To have Hattersley as Prime Minister would be to have Open Government, a Freedom of Information Act and an end to secret diplomacy all in one fell swoop. It makes a democrat positively lightheaded to think of it. Owen on the other hand is something of an unidentified flying object. What do we, heck, what do we actually know about Owen? We know that he's against smoking, in favour of peace, and furiously jealous of Hattersley. What sort of a character is that?

I have been reading two long speeches recently, the one by Hattersley which appeared in NS 18 November under the title 'Managing the Mixed Economy', and the other by David Owen on the perils of Eurocommunism. Not at all bad, either of them, but what were they really saying? What was the subtext? It seems to me that in both cases the subtext was the same. Hi there, the speeches said, look at me, the heir to the mantle of Tony Crosland. Don't pay any attention to that other chap. I'm the one. I said don't pay any attention to that other chap!

Well now, it is generally thought that the mantle of Tony Crosland is, as we say, up for grabs. It is also often said nowadays that Shirley Williams has failed to reach out and grab it. After a promising start, she seems to have gone into a bit of a decline. So it is not surprising that other candidates are renewing their efforts. But what I should like to ask is: is the mantle of Tony Crosland the right thing to be fighting over? Might it not, as we sometimes say, turn out to be a shirt of Nessus?

This is the sort of question which political journalism loves to pose. It *seems* to mean something. Perhaps to someone, somewhere, it does mean something. But every time I try to concentrate on it, the meaning recedes from my mind. If I look at it with the rods at the periphery of my vision, I am pretty sure it is there. If I concentrate on it with the cones at the centre of the retina, it vanishes. When I look at the ground, it passes overhead, casting a saucer-shaped shadow over the landscape. But when I look up at the sky, it is already gone.

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Roger Omond

South Africa's Foregone Conclusion

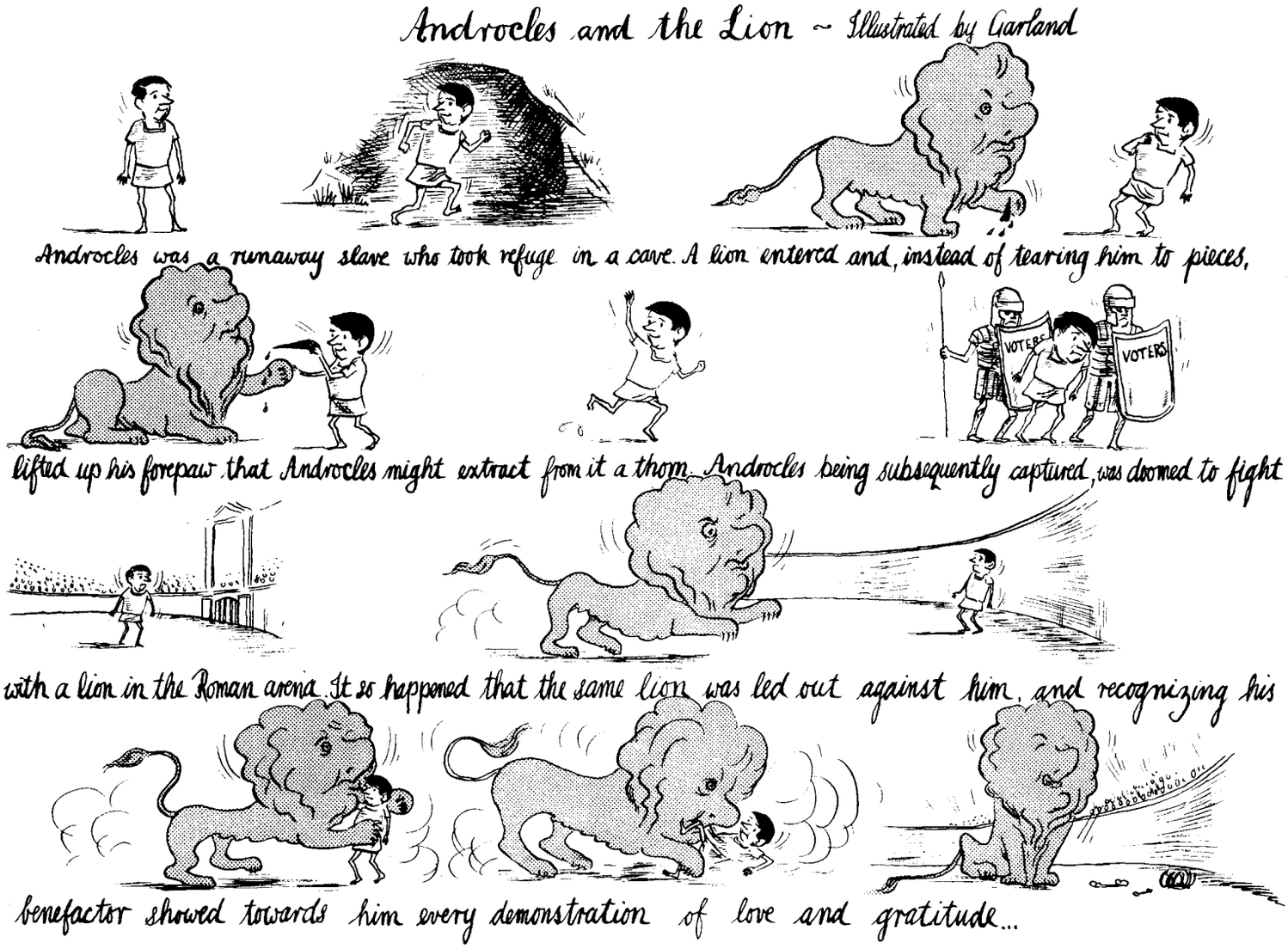
Jimmy who? they've been asking around South Africa these last few weeks. Jimmy has made the headlines again, somebody would comment, and back would come the question: Which Jimmy? For as the election campaign hotted up there were two: Carter and Kruger. Both were cited as villains: Carter said to have been trying to dictate to us what should happen in South Africa from a distance of several thousand miles away; Kruger said by the Opposition parties to be a one-man disaster area who, unhappily, is right here in Pretoria and who *does* dictate (literally) what will happen to men and women who cross his ideological path.

Carter's alleged interference in South Africa's internal affairs was just one of four reasons why Prime Minister Vorster said he called the snap election a few days after the death of Steve Biko on 12 September – timing that the American UN Ambassador Andy Young, for one, found just a little bit more than coincidental. The other reasons for the trip to the polls included the Government's new constitutional proposals and the disarray in the Opposition parties.

The constitutional plans were supposed to make a vital, exciting reason to vote for the ruling National Party. They were drawn up by the unlikely combination of P. W. Botha, the firebrand Minister of Defence and ex-party organiser of whom Helen Suzman once said that if he was female he would travel atop a broomstick, and the academic, allegedly *verligte* Denis Worrall, a political scientist turned politician. The two, with a little help from their friends, produced from behind generally closed doors a constitutional model that made a Chinese puzzle look obvious and simple. It was sufficiently complicated to baffle most of the electorate, sufficiently racist to earn quick rejection by Coloured and Indian leaders who would be brought into a sham decision-making process, sufficiently radical to make *verligtes* think there was some kind of breakthrough and yet sufficiently conservative, once all the important points had been blurred, not to scare off too many *verkramptes* (ultra-Rightists).

The Government ran it up the flagpole to see if any voter saluted. It soon became obvious nobody had. So, in the best Nationalist tradition that says if you're looking for votes find a scapegoat, out came the first Jimmy. Carter by name. President by profession. Obsessed by reputation with trying to plough the white man into the ground, forcing one-man, one-vote on white South Africa, determined to make the Afrikaner lose his identity. If all the platform rhetoric was to be taken seriously, Jimmy Carter was Satan in Pennsylvania Avenue.

So what should the voter do? 'Stem Nasionale,' naturally, as the posters urged. Support John Vorster. Tell the outside world we won't tolerate interference in our domestic affairs. Just how voting Nationalist would keep the world off our backs was never made quite clear. But it was all designed to promote a nice, cosy feeling of white solidarity. And it may have worked. Even the Progressive Federal Party (PFP) under Colin Eglin (who should know better) fell into Vorster's trap after the cries of 'unpatriotic' and 'un-South African' grew shriller. Eglin used a party pre-election conference to denounce the Carter Administration's record on South Africa as 'appalling' and to say that the US seemed more determined to make South Africa suffer for not changing than it was to encourage change. The pressure for all to move into the 'centre' of white South African politics grew stronger after the UN imposed a mandatory arms embargo. The PFP strove to prove it was as patriotic as the Nationalists (who have taken out a patent on patriotism). Significantly Helen Suzman gently distanced herself from Eglin's


Androcles and the Lion ~ Illustrated by Garland
Androcles was a runaway slave who took refuge in a cave. A lion entered and, instead of tearing him to pieces,
VOTERS
VOTERS
lifted up his forepaw that Androcles might extract from it a thorn. Androcles being subsequently captured, was doomed to fight
with a lion in the Roman arena. It so happened that the same lion was led out against him, and recognizing his
benefactor showed towards him every demonstration of love and gratitude...

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blunder, which annoyed a sizeable number of whites to the Left of the PFP but who felt that the limited range of party options left them no alternative but to give it qualified support, at least on election day. So Jimmy (the Carter one) became the bogeyman for all sides: the American President who represented as big a threat to white South Africa as Moscow, as one cabinet minister put it. Andy Young, too, took his place as the biggest loudmouth in the West since 'Soapy' Williams. And Young, of course, had the advantage, for Nationalist propagandists, of being black.

The electoral tactic might have worked out fine for the Government: we will know by today. But there was also the other Jimmy: James Thomas Kruger, Minister of Justice, Police and Prisons. In what should have been a back-to-the-laager, damn the world election campaign, Kruger kept putting his foot in it and making some sections of the electorate wonder whether our *pro tem* rulers are all they are cracked up to be. Jimmy Kruger was initially widely condemned for making tasteless remarks about Steve Biko, the Black Consciousness leader who died in Special Branch detention (Kruger's Department). Then roly-poly, affable Jimmy K. managed the remarkable feat of insulting English-speaking South Africans, Greek South Africans and Jewish South Africans in the space of a couple of weeks. So bad was his last gaffe that Foreign Minister Pik Botha had to send off a gritted-teeth apology to Israel. Less diplomatic Ministers sounded off (again) at the English press. Its fault appeared to be that it had actually reported what Kruger had said. Kruger has been a clown prince of Nationalist Afrikanerdom for a couple of years. Whether he will keep his position depends to some extent on how many English-speaking South Africans vote for the National Party: many are reported to have been scared off by Kruger's antics. Vorster wants these votes to show the outside world South Africa's motto *ex unitate vires*. He also wants to carve up the New Republic Party, which when it was still the United Party commanded the wishy-washy centre between apartheid and cautious multi-racialism. Even Kruger's errors are unlikely to have been sufficient to rescue the New Republic Party from well-deserved oblivion. It is likely that Vorster will have achieved his aim and that the political stage will be dominated even more by the Nationalists with the PFP on the sidelines, easily portrayed as leftist radicals.

A week before the election came the still-unexplained murder of Nationalist candidate Robert Smit and his wife, and the bomb in Johannesburg's luxury Carlton Centre. A severe attack of the jitters swept through white South Africa and Kruger made one of his 'I told you so' press statements. Just what effect those incidents will have is uncertain but one Afrikaans journalist remarked that the Nationalists could not have been done bigger electoral favours.

The four Opposition parties scrambled uncertainly around the issues Vorster had created, most of the time trying to sweep each other out of the limelight rather than trying to get the Nationalists out – an understandable clawing for the stage, as nothing will dislodge the Nationalists from power through the ballot box. So the South African Party fought the New Republic Party who fought the Progressive Federal Party. The minuscule Herstige Nasionale party, whose influence on the Right far outstrips its membership or electoral support, nipped at the Nationalist heels in yet another bid to gain, if not a solitary seat, at least more than 2 per cent of the poll, which would put a brake on the much bandied-about changes due to alter the face of South Africa after this week's counting of the votes has been completed.

The HNP's position is simple: it doesn't want change, at least not in any forward direction. Nationalist *verligtes* argue that change is necessary and can be brought about only by voting Nationalist: a dubious claim that we have heard before. The New Republican and Progressive Federal parties argued about which could be the most effective Opposition and which could better influence the Government – from outside the caucus room – to make the changes needed for peace and stability. Economics and bread-and-butter issues played a minor role in the campaign despite soaring unemployment (especially among blacks) and the worst depression since the 1930s. It was a guns before butter election. And despite the arms boycott, in fact partially because of it, guns will probably have pulled in the votes.

Pretoria

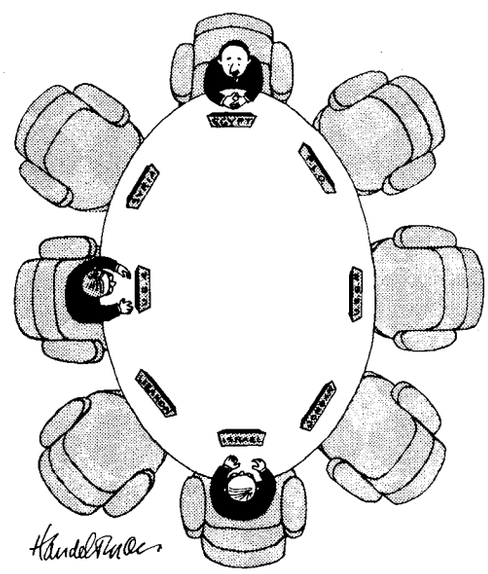
Patrick Seale

Sadat's Shock Therapy

The sight of the Arabs scattering to three rival conferences in response to President Sadat's latest conjuring trick might well persuade impatient Westerners to despair of Arab logic. But what the West fails to appreciate is the extent of the trauma the Arabs are suffering. Like a motorist staggering away from a road accident, they are in a state of profound shock. For the moment gut reaction supplants dispassionate analysis.

Talk to the most moderate and sophisticated among them (Egyptians apart), and you will find their first response to be an overwhelming awareness of 30 years' wasted efforts. Whether Sadat has opened up the future is not the issue: he has annulled the past.

What weighs most heavily on Arab hearts and minds is the extent of the investment in Palestine which Sadat has now shown to be vain. Over a generation, the Palestine cause had become an integral component of the Arab nationalist creed, a foundation stone of Arab identity. Arabs defined themselves in large measure by their commitment to Palestine. In the name of Palestine, the Arabs put up with military dictators, lost their civil liberties, postponed the hope of building modern, liberal societies in cooperation with the West.



'This is a very important conference, gentlemen. Let us hope nobody walks out.'

More mundane efforts have also been set at naught. What value now the millions spent in Africa to edge Israel out, the complications of the boycott, the endless procedural wrangles at the United Nations, the diplomatic campaigns fought out in a dozen UN agencies? All reduced to dust. No wonder some say that Sadat has paid too high a price.

If to all this is added the acute Arab sense of honour and shame, and the importance Bedouin culture gives to persistence in revenge, some notion may be grasped of why Arab morale is now reeling. It is not altogether an exaggeration to compare Sadat's handshake in Jerusalem to the defeat the Arabs suffered in 1948 – what they call simply 'the Disaster' – or to the destruction of Nasserism in 1967.

In fact, some historical perspective is essential to understand Sadat's move, which, however much it surprised the world, is the outcome of a process set in train by the 1973 October War. In the Egyptian mind, it was a war not of conquest but to make peace. The disengagement agreements which followed it took Egypt out of the front line, leaving Syria exposed to the full threat of Israeli power and the Palestinians with a sense of abandonment. Seized with panic, the latter sought to consolidate their hold on Lebanon, their last refuge. The stage was set for the Lebanese civil war, in which Syria was forced to crush the Palestinians.

Just as disengagement in Sinai contributed to civil war in Lebanon, so that war in turn created the conditions for Sadat's daring overture to the Israelis. The agony of Lebanon demonstrated the bankruptcy of the Arab political order, no longer able to provide a framework in which differences could coexist. The eleventh-hour Syrian invasion also brought home the fact that, faced with a direct clash between the interests of a state and the interests of the Palestinians, an Arab leader must in the end act to protect his own country. King

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Hussein had of course set a precedent with Black September in 1970, but his bloody chastisement of the Palestinians was discounted as the work of a Western stooge.

When Syria, the staunchest champion of Arabism, in turn crushed the Palestinians – and got away with it – it was evident that the cause to which the Arabs had given so much for so long was wearing thin. One after another, the Arab states are in effect declaring their independence from the Palestine cause, in the face of a bewildered public opinion and a Palestinian movement in greater disarray and despair than ever before.

In this troubled climate, has Sadat's 'electric shock therapy' any chance of curing the Middle East patient? It could be argued that there are only three powers of substance in the area: Egypt, Israel, and oil. If these three got together and agreed the terms of a settlement, the weaker brethren could hardly overturn it.

Of these lesser states, Syria is the most important. It is the power in Arab Asia most directly implicated in the conflict, and no settlement which excludes it can be entirely stable. Given its own anxiety for a negotiated settlement, there is an apparent paradox in Syria's hostility to Sadat. A number of factors explain its current stance: emotional unpreparedness for hobnobbing with the enemy, the need to rebuild with the Palestinians bridges burnt in Lebanon, and, more profoundly, the re-emergence of the old struggle with Cairo (newly with Riyadh) for regional hegemony.

If Sadat succeeds in winning from Israel concessions for the Palestinians, he would replace the Syrians as their main champion, and so puncture Syrian pretensions to extend its influence over 'Natural Syria' – that is to say, Lebanon, Jordan and whatever Palestinian territory can be salvaged from the Israelis.

From the moment Sadat announced that he was ready to go to Jerusalem, Syria's uncertainty about how to react has been clear. It wants peace as badly as Sadat, but it cannot abide being upstaged by him or reduced to a junior partner. Nor, however, can it veer the other way into the 'rejectionist' fold. Trapped uneasily in a circle of adversaries, it is doing its best to keep its options open. If Israel shows itself to be flexible on the Palestinian issue, it is likely that Assad, under pressure from the United States, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, will before long rejoin Sadat, thus reopening the way to Geneva. Kurt Waldheim's call for a post-Cairo conference may help heal the breach.

As for the poor, battered PLO, it is rent between the temptation of outright rejection and the yearning for a homeland, however small. But whatever concessions Israel eventually makes on the West Bank, it remains implacably opposed to both the PLO and to a Palestinian state. Thus it looks as if the tacit premise, the guilty secret underlying Sadat's peace initiative, Assad's turmoil, Hussein's fence-sitting, and the pregnant silence from Riyadh is that these two expressions of Palestinian identity may soon be sacrificed. From their safe distance Libya and Iraq may pay reverence to the old cause, but the confrontation states at least have had enough.

John Griffith

An Expensive Umpire

Newspaper accounts of judicial decisions are inevitably shortened versions of the real thing and the *Packer* judgment (or *Greig and Others* v. *Insole and Others, World Series Cricket Party Ltd* v. *Same* as the Law Reports will know it) in four full columns of *The Times* was only the tops and tails of 211 foolscap pages which took Mr Justice Slade five-and-a-half hours to deliver.

For almost all decent middle-class English ladies and gentlemen there were no doubts which lot were supporting the values which we hold most dear. Only to look upon the faces of Douglas Insole and Donald Carr (chairman and secretary of the Test and County Cricket Board) and Jack Bailey (secretary of the International Cricket Conference) should be enough for anyone. And this is reinforced by viewing Tony Greig who is not only 'not a true Englishman' but also has not always shown the best of good manners on the field; and Mr Packer who is both vulgarly rich and richly vulgar, an overwhelming combination (to some) of the dislikeable.

For 31 days they slogged it out in court at prodigious expense, especially to the losers. And reading the judgment, which in its shortened form may be unfair to the losers, one wonders why the Test and County Cricket Board and the International Cricket Conference persisted so long. I had not realised their case was so weak.

The Packer offer broke surface on 9 May, and in July the ICC changed its rules in a manner which, if implemented, was likely effectively to disqualify any of the individual plaintiffs (Greig, John Snow and Mike Procter) from playing in official international Test cricket for an indefinite time if he played in any cricket match organised by the WSC. And the TCCB proposed, subject to the court's decision, to change its rules in a manner which was likely to disqualify the plaintiffs from playing in English county cricket for at least several years. And, of course, not only these particular plaintiffs.

Were these proposed bans unreasonable restraints of trade on the cricketers? Were they void as denying 'the right to work'? And were the new rules an unlawful inducement to the players involved to break their contracts with the WSC? It is extremely difficult to see how the judge could have come to any other decision than that they were.

Mr Justice Slade paid his tribute to the cricket authorities. He had been impressed, he said, by their obvious disinterested dedication to, and concern for, the game. He wholly rejected any suggestion that they were careless of the difficulties and needs of the players. On the other hand, the authorities

> found it difficult to understand how any cricketer could, even for good commercial reasons, bring himself to do anything which could be thought likely, directly or indirectly, to damage the structure of international cricket . . .
>
> Transcripts of the ICC and TCCB discussions leading up to the bans contained conspicuously few references to the interests of the players themselves who had entered into contracts, with WSC. It was implicit in much of the discussion that such players as a class did not merit much personal consideration because they had been in breach of moral commitments to the cricketing authorities in entering into those contracts in conditions of secrecy.

Much seems to have been said about moral commitment and his lordship himself saw 'the possible force' of such criticism directed against Greig who had conducted some of the secret 'negotiations, when he had just completed a tour of Australia as England's captain.

But it was also important to remember that neither the Cricket Council (the governing body in England, recognised by the ICC) nor the TCCB had entered into any kind of commitment, legal *or otherwise*, ever to offer employment to any of the players again; and that the players themselves had entered into no contractual commitment precluding them from playing cricket for a private promoter.

Applying the general principles of the restraint of trade cases, Mr Justice Slade said that if cricketing authorities employed a player to go on tour or to play in Test matches at home, it might be open to them, *as a matter of fair negotiation*, to demand from him, as a price for the privileges which he himself would derive from participating in the matches, a limited covenant precluding him from playing for competitors. But the argument from morality was not persuasive. It was

> straining the concept of loyalty too far for authorities such as the defendants to expect him to enter into a self-denying ordinance not to play cricket for a private promoter during the winter months merely because the matches promoted could detract from the future profits made by the authorities who were not themselves willing or in a position to offer him employment over the winter or guarantee him employment for the future.

This is strong stuff and it has produced some curious reactions. 'Moral issues', Mr Robin Marlar wrote last Sunday 'are paramount in cricket'. The judgment, he thought, represented 'a burglar's licence for a pirate in athletics, rugby or even soccer'. The judgment 'ought now to be a matter for the politicians'. Then Mr Marlar wrote:

> A sporting society *exhibiting the moral values* which Mr Justice Slade has had in law to appear to support is not, in my judgment, a *healthy* one. In many other respects the Eastern bloc values are not perhaps a suitable model. However, millions take part in sport there, *accept its disciplines and values*, and enjoy taking part. Packer, one

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fancies, would have short shrift in East Germany.

Well, well. The emphases are mine but I wonder if they are necessary. I did not expect to see the day when a public and influential supporter of the English cricketing authorities, in order to ensure that they should retain monopolistic control, would suggest that government regulation should determine the game's moral values, purge its unhealthy elements and, impose on it the necessary disciplines. Will all those members of the MCC who agree with Mr Marlar please raise their right fists?

The final outcome of the dispute is unclear and depends, in part, on how far Mr Packer can pack them in in Australia. A quarter of a million pounds seems a lot of money to spend on not settling an industrial dispute.

Allan Ashbolt

Whitlam's Chance of Revenge

Australia's current election campaign is one of the most curious for decades – boring, conventional and lack-lustre in its surface manifestations, yet swirling with convulsive undercurrents. The most fascinating aspect of Malcolm Fraser's policy speech, for example, was that he delivered it with his head and shoulders covered in confetti, which on the colour television screen looked like clownish daubings and, in black and white, like giant blobs of dandruff. Was this adventitious showering the ruse of some devious Labour agitator in the audience? Or merely the bumbling, misjudged enthusiasm of a dull-witted Liberal? At his best, the PM can bring an autocratic incisiveness to his performances, but the effect of the confetti was to give him, as he recited his litany of promises, the appearance of a used-ideas salesman hawking a bagful of bribes.

He seemed over-anxious, his tone slightly strangulated, as though disturbed not so much by the confetti as by the realisation that he may have made a mistake in opting for an election on 10 December, a year ahead of the due date. For months past he has relied on confrontationist tactics, challenging the rights of trade unions, condemning the movement against uranium mining, rejecting all forms of neo-Keynesianism: yet here he was, muting his shrill, divisive cry of who-runs-the-country and reverting to the Menzies technique of dangling tawdry financial enticements before the voters – in this case, parity of petrol prices as between rural and urban areas, income tax reductions and the abolition of federal death duties. What is the attraction, however, of a tax reform scheme designed to put 20 times as much in the PM's pocket as in the average worker's? Who except privileged sections of the community would benefit from the wiping out of death duties? And whatever the short-run appeal to farmers of marginally lower petrol costs, how can automobile fuel become cheaper in the long run, when world demand for oil is outstripping supply?

In late October, an early election appeared to favour the Government. Now the PM is fighting a rearguard action, partly because he reckoned without the uneasiness and anger over unemployment, partly because he failed to understand the volatility of the Australian electorate. Consider, for a start, the factors which have brought parliamentary politics into question and even disrepute: four general elections since the end of 1972, five prime ministers of the last dozen years still alive and projecting some sort of public presence (if only in the bizarre instance of John Gorton, through television advertisements for whisky and occasional radio commentaries), one prime minister from that same span of time mysteriously drowned, a governor-general who conducted a quasi-constitutional coup against the Labour government and is about to be retired by the beneficiaries of his action, a chief justice, who advised, aided and abetted the dismissal of Whitlam from office and, to cap it all, a treasurer who, notable for his holier-than-thou attempts to besmirch the Labour Party with moral, fiscal and monetary irresponsibility over its 1975 foreign loans negotiations, has been forced to resign because he set up a family trust which dabbled remuneratively (albeit perhaps legally) in real estate and tax avoidance.

Add to these circumstances a Queensland premier who retains shareholdings in a company tendering to his own government for a lucrative contract, a West Australian premier recently thwarted in his efforts to deny the vote to outback Aborigines, a premier in Victoria embattled by an inquiry into land speculation involving several of his colleagues, and it will be seen that Australia hardly presents a picture of political stability, scarcely stands as a monument to the enduring strength of the Westminster system. (Phillip Lynch's resignation as treasurer was in the highest traditions of that system, according to the PM in one of his more egregious back-to-the-wall statements.)

There is a widespread, though by no means universal, mood of cynicism and disillusionment. It began with Whitlam's inability to control the economic downturn in 1974-75: it has intensified with Fraser's pampering of industry and commerce through subsidies, tax concessions, grants-in-aid and investment allowances while he insists on wage restraint, belt-tightening and cuts in public sector expenditure. Even wheat-growers hit by drought, and cattlemen by falling beef prices, have become bitter and rebellious; and disenchantment turns to despair in the brick-veneer and fibro wastes of the outer suburbs, where masses of unemployed youngsters drift from dole payment to drugs or petty crime and where parents struggle to meet mortgage costs, interest rates on hire purchase commodities and food bills inflated by the determination of the producing, processing and distributing companies to keep profit levels buoyant.

This malaise has even prompted the formation of a new party, the Australian Democrats, which got launched soon after an ex-Liberal minister, Don Chipp, defected from government ranks. Chipp is almost but not quite a republican, almost but not quite against uranium mining, almost but not quite against the dominance of overseas capital in business. He purports to be voicing the dilemmas of the ordinary Australian: he scorns the careerism and expediency of the established parties: he speaks of his followers eventually holding 'the balance of reason' in Parliament. Such a party, containing elements of populism, utopianism and messianism, is unlikely to survive beyond a few years. But it has sprung, full-armed, out of the brain of Chipp, at an interesting historical moment. For seldom have a prime minister and an Opposition leader been so disliked and distrusted on the electorate's middle ground which both have at various times tried to occupy and claimed to represent. As a result, the second preferences allotted by Democrat voters may decide the outcome of the election and Chipp himself will almost certainly be catapulted into the Senate.

'Get Australia working' is the Labour theme. Ostensibly, it refers to the need for tackling unemployment, now at more than 5 per cent of the workforce and likely soon to rise above 7 per cent. What this slogan really means, though, is that Labour aims to get capitalism working again: it has offered, for example, to abolish company payroll tax (now paid direct to state governments) and re-imburse the states out of consolidated revenue, thus increasing the amounts available to private enterprise for

Roger Woddis

Poor Bloody Infantry

I saw this 'Be Professional' ad.,
I heard the sergeant speak:
He said, 'You look a likely lad
For thirty quid a week.'

No one could really ask for more,
These billets where I stay;
No heat or carpet on the floor,
We call it Suite F.A.

When duty's done I groom a horse,
And Nobby drives a cab;
The C.O.'s on a training course
And learning how to scab.

To boost his pay an extra pound
Sid serves behind a bar,
The Corporal's on a paper-round
And Tim's a gay Hussar.

And we are glad to do our bit;
We try to make ends meet,
And we can always add to it
By begging in the street.

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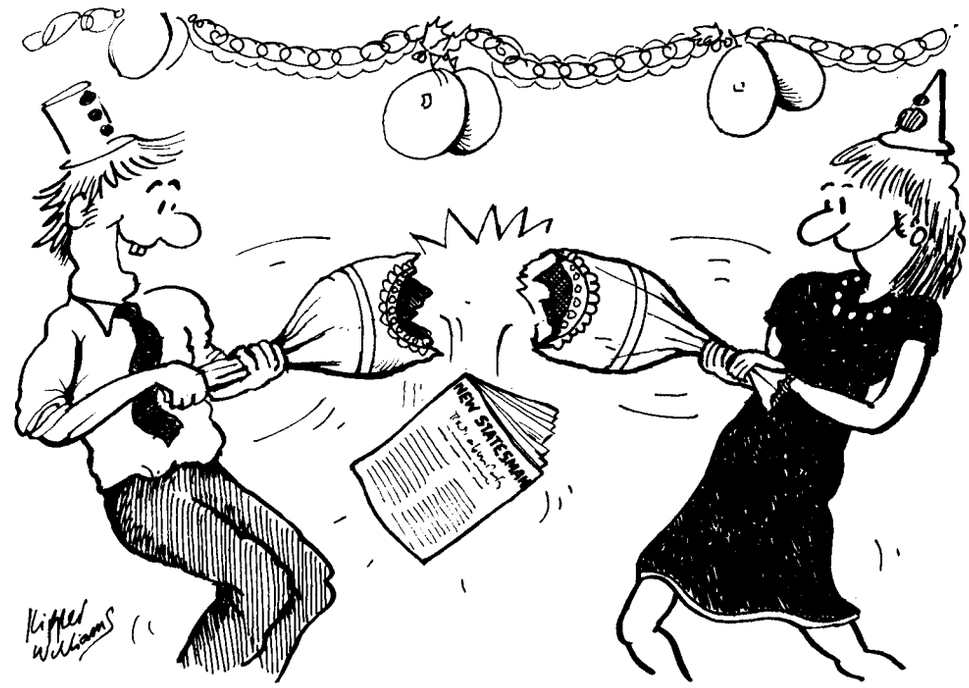
the expansion of productive resources and, presumably, of job opportunities. There is no hint in the platform of socialisation, no suggestion of taking over the commanding heights of the economy, only the barest indication that corporations like Utah Development (which, in the words of the Australian *Financial Review*, 'will repatriate more cash to the US this year than any company has earned in Australia's history') might be subjected to levies. The fact is that Labour federally has fallen back on the strategy pursued in South Australia and New South Wales, where state Labour governments have survived successfully by accommodating to the ethos and practices of capitalism, while trying to retain smatterings of working-class identity by introducing various ameliorative measures and widening the scope of civil liberties.

Australia now has a right-wing conservative party, the Liberal-National/Country Party coalition, which judges productivity by corporate profit, human welfare by export earnings and the quality of social relations by the capacity to pay. And it has a left-wing conservative party, known as Labour, which is basically concerned with tidying up the mess generated by capitalist activity and so-called free market mechanisms – i.e., reducing unemployment, distributing wealth more evenly, giving the poor, the Aborigines and the ethnic minorities a fairer go, improving public utilities, and finding more money for schools and universities. Labour is, of course, in the classic social-democratic squeeze, aware that it will gain and hold majority support only by sticking to practical bread-and-butter issues and avoiding deep or extensive structural changes. We almost seem to be back in the pragmatic, non-doctrinaire atmosphere of the early Labour parties, typified in the remark of one politician who, when asked to define his programme, replied: 'My programme? Ten bob a day.'

Yet that critical view may be a shade too harsh. Labour's radical parliamentarians, headed by the deputy Opposition leader, Tom Uren, have consistently hammered the uranium issue throughout 1977, attacking not just the health and genetic hazards of nuclear processing and power plants, the lack of safe waste disposal methods, the risks of plutonium accumulation and the dangers of building fast-breeder reactors, but the whole question of who owns the land and who decides how it shall be used. In the campaign proper, uranium hardly looms as large as unemployment: however, there can be little doubt that the constant protests, marches and debates during the past year have heightened public consciousness of the connection between economic exploitation and human degradation. So that, with Labour's vanguard still alive and flourishing, with Whitlam curbing his arrogance but deploying his waspish wit to excellent effect, and Hayden the very model of ministerial competence, sobriety and articulateness, it is possible to express a certain nervous optimism about 10 December. Surely something must go wrong for Labour before then? Or do the press proprietors, the financial institutions and the CIA regard Labour as by now sufficiently tamed?

Sydney



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Ben Whitaker

Reverse Injustice?

The case of Allan Bakke, which is at present before the United States Supreme Court, is not only the most important American civil rights test case for 23 years, but also raises crucial issues of social policy for other countries including Britain. Its arguments impel difficult decisions about the proper basis for – as well as the motivation and effects of – reverse discrimination.

Alias positive or benevolent discrimination, *alias* minority-sensitive programmes, *alias* affirmative action; this is the preferential action that educational bodies and employers are being required by the US Government to take in order to increase their intake of the members of minorities. Bakke is a white man who claims that this policy unfairly deprived him of his rights and opportunities. He is suing the Davis Medical School of the University of California which twice rejected his application while admitting 16 black and other minority applicants less well qualified than himself. The university's policy is to reserve 16 places for minority people out of 100. Bakke won the first legal round when the Californian Supreme Court upheld his claim that his constitutional right to equal treatment had been violated. The university has now appealed to the Supreme Court – which for weeks has been considering briefs from a variety of interests – arguing that 'to be blind to race today is to be blind to reality' and that people who have been held back should be 'helped up to the starting line'.

Few social scientists (as opposed perhaps to lawyers) would disagree with some form of affirmative action as a means of trying to correct the past injustices and present imbalances of status and opportunity in society. But the divisive issue is whether discriminatory quotas can be the right way to redress wrongs done to women or the members of black and other minorities. For where educational places or jobs are limited, imposing a quota can only be at the expense of someone else. 'Is it right,' asked Lord Scarman in his recent Minority Rights Group lecture, 'that the individual should pay the price needed to provide advancement for the disadvantaged group – in this case the high price of denial of career opportunity?' This issue, inevitably, involves an irreconcilable conflict of human rights (as does the closed shop, or the tug-of-war between the culture of travelling gypsies and their children's right to education). The excluded victims, moreover, are themselves likely to be innocent, and are being sacrificed to exculpate the sins of other oppressors who share their race or sex. Bakke has a right to be considered as an individual, non-racially and free from group stigmatisation, as much as anybody else. Any quota policy in addition raises formidable practical problems: Chicanos, native Americans (Indians), the disabled, and homosexuals for instance can equally make cases for reserved places. Random ballotting might be one alternative that at least would be equally unfair to all.

Virtually everybody can agree on wanting to eliminate unfair discrimination. Laws which prohibit discriminatory acts should not, as has recently been suggested, be only temporary: they should remain on the statute book as a declaration of social standards and as a safeguard against any new outbreak of prejudice that might be triggered by, for instance, more serious recession. The harder task is deciding what positive steps should be taken to break cycles of deprivation.

In principle, there can be no conflict between the interests of society and those of any of its individuals in the desirability of refining selection procedures and freeing them from bias. Too many of these still unfairly discriminate, consciously or otherwise; for example, several universities give preference to children of former graduates (unlikely to include immigrants or children from the poorest families), or to rowing or football stars (unlikely to help many women). To take one minority, many blacks feel that, as Professor Tom Blair has pointed out, their chances of admission to university are handicapped *inter alia* by: the WASP middle-class ethos of most entry examinations and interviews; their own families' economic background and housing conditions which often handicap home study; geographic location (the best universities and schools are rarely situated close to black areas); and their own motivation, undermined by traditions of a depressed self-concept – quite apart from any negrophobic racism in decision-making whites. The accumulative combination of such factors demonstrates the fallacy of 'false equality': the doctrine that to do nothing can be fair to all.

To rectify such situations, with all their resulting waste of talent as well as unfairness, the case for some affirmative action is unanswerable. But, despite the complexity involved, such remedies are better applied to individuals than to groups, on grounds both of social policy and of justice. Moreover, although racism and sexism are peculiarly pernicious and elusive to counter, the most prevalent disadvantage of all is poverty. Although blacks in poor areas suffer double deprivation, poor white areas, too, must be tackled. Any social logic or justice in intervening artificially to reserve, for example, a place for a rich black man at the cost of depriving an abler poor white woman, is difficult to discern. In addition, to apply affirmative action remedies simply on the basis of ethnicity or sex can be misconceived as well as inaccurate. Such a policy may relieve the guilt of liberal white males haunted by the past, but for many women or members of minorities it is humiliating and patronising to be aware that they could owe their posts to tokenism.

The immediate action required to counterbalance past injustice should be spearheaded by programmes such as pumping massive extra funds into poorer areas' housing and, most urgently, schools – making their teacher-ratio and resources weightedly advantageous, so that their users' opportunities in jobs and further education are radically helped. Of course, in addition to poverty, race and sex, the criteria of individuals' disadvantage can be compounded of several other factors, which perhaps computers can least partially and imperfectly help to evaluate. But, inescapably, it is the state's responsibility to compensate for these by the necessary additional programmes.

The Bakke case illustrates a second potential conflict of rights: between the needs of society and those of minorities. Breakthroughs in medical research, and the cure of sick minority patients themselves, are most likely to be achieved by a publicly responsible service containing doctors of merit, irrespective of race or sex. The US, like the UK, certainly has a need for more doctors who will work in poor and minorities' areas, but this problem must be tackled by public incentives to make all the professions socially responsive, as well as a national health service and more medical schools. It cannot be helped by providing less competent doctors.

The only effective solution to the basic dilemma is to rethink the function and priorities of education in society. Meanwhile it is necessary to decide what to do about the imperfect here and now. A possible way to slice the cake would be to apply

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different policies in cases where the training principally benefited the successful applicant (e.g. the School of English at Oxbridge) from those in which the training was of primary importance to society (e.g. medical and scientific work): using reverse discrimination in the former and criteria of merit for the latter – while overall purging selection of middle-class male WASP bias.

Britain, which has a habit of facing social problems a few years after the US has experienced them, cannot escape similar controversies. Sections 35, 37 and 38 of the UK's present Race Relations Act permit a degree of reverse discrimination in favour of members of a particular racial group: test cases about the limits of this are bound to arise. Recently, ILEA has been recommended to begin to keep statistics on the ethnic origins of its teaching staff as well as children. Such a 'numbers-game' policy was originally opposed by several ethnic minority leaders who now are in favour of it. But it is criticised by many teachers such as Ken Rudge who argues that it is wrong first because the problem

> can be cured only by a more fundamental change – education of the population to counter racial bias; secondly the discrimination experienced is but a particularly nasty and extreme example of the discrimination which is and always has been known to the poor and downtrodden in our community, whatever their racial origin . . . As the head of a school with a very high proportion of children of West Indian origin I become increasingly convinced that any problems I have in my school cannot be related to blackness but are related to social disadvantage, and the Caribbean children are particularly prone to that, since they are among the poorest sections of the community. The difficulties they may cause teachers are the same ones, very largely, as those caused by white working-class children in the same socio-economic group.

The principle of using quotas in order to carry out affirmative action has been condemned by minorities which are undesignated and are thereby disadvantaged. It has also emotively divided liberal opinion in America. It is repugnant to a number of libertarians of all races who distrust the reintroduction of racial criteria from however well-meaning a motive: they cannot accept that it is right to divide people on the grounds of genetic characteristics or that what they have been fighting all these years in southern Africa can suddenly be welcomed as a liberal policy at home. Ronald Dworkin, in a brilliant article in the *New York Review of Books*, which is almost persuasive, argues that the ends justify these means. But it is questionable whether the advocates of quotas give enough weight to the strain these will inevitably cause to the social fabric, and which could end in bringing more damage and dislike for minorities than before. Above all I believe there is a very real danger that racial preferences will result in setting poor against poor – the very same division that has paralysed social progress in Northern Ireland for generations.

It is an objectionable strategy to be used as a temporary expedient if at all: the real solution can only be to tackle those basic faults in society which give rise to both prejudice and deprivation.

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Profile: Brian Clough

Born Again

One Thursday in October of 1974 you could have seen a man with a Tintin tuft of hair standing all day in a wet Derby street. It was election day and he stood canvassing a hundred yards down from the polling booth. The owner of the tuft did not pander. His introduction, brusque to the point of rudeness, went 'Hello, I'm Brian Clough and I want to know what you are going to do in there', tuft nodding towards the polling station. It's said a lot of constituents of Derby North passed a lot of polling stations in the hope of being accosted by Clough, if only to talk about political morality. As manager of Derby County he gave tickets to picketing miners and made his players contribute part of their wages to Oxfam. Echoing Keir Hardie he says 'my socialism is that of the heart and not of the head. I want people to have a choice; very few people do have that, when you come to think how many choices there are.' In many ways his socialism is that of a Victorian northern radical – an advocate of self-improvement with an artisan's pride in his profession, a faith in the good nature of the honest born Englishman and a strong sense of the hypocrisy of a corrupt London Establishment. His wife is just as bizarre a phenomenon for football. Her first love is ballet.

Clough is 'going to London next week', as he coyly puts it, 'for an interview for a job that is the top of my profession'. After the departure of Sir Alf Ramsey from the England managership a poll showed that 30 per cent (the largest single vote) wanted Clough as successor; when Revie fled to the sands 90 per cent of *Mirror* readers called for Clough under banner headlines 'People's Choice'. Clough almost has a sense of destiny about himself and the national managership. But already the *Nottingham Post* 'Clough must stay' posters look dated. There will be no World Cup for England but under Greenwood they beat Italy well. Clough is not liked by the FA coaches who will influence 70-year-old Sir Harold Thompson, a former Oxford don, author of *Advances in Spectroscopy*, instigator of the rise and demise of Pegasus. Looking at the selection committee and the Italy result the national press have ditched Clough as a lost cause.

Born in the Middlesbrough council house that his parents lived in for over 30 years, Clough was one of eight children dependent on the sweet factory wages of his father. Although one of those eight died he remembers his childhood as being 'remarkably happy' and frequently refers to his mother's stamina and desire to see them get on. He burst into tears when he failed his 11-plus. After leaving the local secondary modern he worked as a clerk in ICI. Football became a serious alternative only relatively late. He broke the goal-scoring record with 251 goals in 271 matches for Middlesbrough but the achievment and the publicity was qualified by the fact that Middlesbrough were in the Second Division. At 26 an injury finished his playing career so he was cheated of the chance of testing his skill at the highest level. It simply made him more determined to be the best as a manager.

The uniqueness of Clough is that he has proved himself repeatedly with different clubs. Nottingham Forest are presently top of the table, but he also took Hartlepool from the bottom of the fourth to the third with so little money that he had to fix the stands and drive the coach himself. With Derby he went from the bottom of the second to the semi-final of the European Cup in four seasons. Bill Shankly described the achievement as 'turning a pig-sty into a European force'. The chairman of Derby County, Sam Longson who at first used to carry a picture of Clough in his wallet and boast he had brought him to Derby, eventually felt upstaged and tried to censor Clough's press articles. Clough pushed his luck (he bought Colin Todd for £300,000 while Longson was in Antigua, cabling him to come back because the club had run out of petty cash). Longson was not pushed upstairs quickly enough. Clough, who had been talked out of resigning a number of times, finally did so without consulting anyone. When it was accepted, Clough was in a hole: an extraordinary movement, which started among the players and then spread to some of the directors and the town, to have him reinstated failed. It all ended bitterly as Clough sued Longson for libel.

Clough describes the resignation as 'the biggest mistake of my life'. It was a measure of the completeness of Clough's managership that Derby went on to win the Championship again two years later. Once he had moved to Nottingham Forest in 1975 the Derby board asked him to return

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to salvage their declining team. The fact that Longson was no longer chairman, that he was building another successful team at Forest and that Derby had come cap in hand was sweet enough. He turned down Derby's offer. The point had been made. More important, the restlessness he had displayed since leaving Derby in 1973 had died down.

Bill Shankly regarded his Liverpool team as 'a form of socialism'. For Clough also football should be a paradigm of life. The way a player performs is a reflection of how seriously he regards his moral responsibilities to his team-mates, the supporters and the game. On the Nottingham Forest team coach the dial points instructively to Radio Four rather than Radio One's pop. 'Show me a talented player who is thick and I'll show you a player who has problems'. It matters desperately to Clough what people are like. Newcomers are grilled and the great assessed 'without the initials after their name'. When Shirley Bassey came to sing in Derby, Clough wished to invite her to a match but one of the directors dissented on the grounds she was coloured. Clough remains astonished: 'how *can* you decide whether or not you like someone before you have met them?' But he got his own back. A large group from Derby County was invited to the Playboy Club; one of the waitresses who was coloured was about to take a photograph of the party seated around a huge table when Clough asked her to give the camera to another girl and to pose immediately behind the offending director.

But he can be surprisingly hard. He will sit in his office with his other half, the coach Peter Taylor (who has been with him at every club but Leeds), deciding what player they will lecture that week. 'He can threaten a player with substitution after five minutes if his attitude is not shown to be right. At half-time Clough holds forth; anyone who interrupts is told to shut up. But his trick is that he will take with one hand and give with the other.' As Derby manager he bought Alan Hinton from Nottingham where the winger had been in the doldrums. Clough very soon banished him to the reserves only to reinstate him as quickly, ordering the other players to 'give it to Alan, he's the best, he'll know what to do with it'. Before long Hinton began believing it and turned into one of the most effective wingers in the country.

Leeds United, under Don Revie epitomised everything he loathed. The impossibility of surpassing Revie's record made it all the stranger that he accepted the offer to succeed him. Previously, he had been hauled up in front of the FA for saying that the Leeds disciplinary record was so bad that they ought to be relegated to the Second Division (Clough himself fines players heavily whether the referee saw the offence or not). At a Yorkshire TV dinner he sat through two hours of after-dinner speeches praising Leeds before it was his turn to speak. He got up to say: 'Before I respond to anyone I am going to the loo.' He returned after 11 minutes to denounce some of the Leeds players as con-men and divers. With this legacy it was not surprising that the Leeds players rebelled. Clough suffered the 'absolute torment of the sack after 44 days . . . the months of unemployment afterwards were the unhappiest time of my life'.

Instead of sticking with a level of ambition measured by JICTAR, Clough deliberately set about constructing a new personality for himself. Clough had an undeniable gift for talking (at bankers' dinners, perhaps attired in a yellow track suit, he could talk for an hour without notes) but those who live by the media die by it. Television was paying for him to be controversial; each extravagance raised the ante a little higher until he was talking only for effect – what was once refreshingly honest became mannered.

The nadir came after England's exit from the World Cup against Poland – he blabbered non-sequiturs and blamed himself for the defeat when he patently had nothing to do with the England team no matter how much he fantasised he was at the centre of things. He finally stepped back and 'cringed' at what he saw of himself on TV. His brothers came to him and said that he was not like them and he says he remembered his mother's motto, 'Don't say it, do it'. 'I realised rather late in life that I was not the best thing that ever appeared on TV and I found out that there were far better and far more intelligent people than me in the world.' He discovered instead a populist's love for the commonplace and expounded on the virtues of 'standing in a fish-and chip-queue, nipping up the local for a beer and doing anything which will keep me among normal people'.

Despite the last two years' retreat into the shadows, his conversation remains just as agitated and egocentric. In private his voice remains as extraordinarily loud. As Queen Victoria said of Gladstone, he speaks to someone as if he were addressing a public meeting. But there is a warmth about him which is not always readily apparent. Very little is allowed to pass him by without his own idiosyncratic reaction being registered.

For example, he loves to extrapolate moral absolutes from the smallest incident. A lad was called into the office who was spending £1.10 to come to the Forest ground to train. Clough thought this was too much and that some lift should be found. The lad inquired whether he should ask Jimmy Gordon, the trainer, which provoked Clough into a lengthy diatribe on how players should show as much initiative off the field as on it. At the end the lad shuffled out muttering 'Thanks, boss' – which triggered Clough off to discuss the respective ethics of being called 'Boss', or 'Mr Clough'. This, in turn, led him on to the subject of leadership and Mr Sadat (the team have just returned from a match in Israel). Sadat 'stole hundreds of years of history. He said he was sick of wars, poverty, being manipulated by Russia and by America. He took on the whole Arab world to go to Jerusalem because he had the courage and because he knew he was right. There is no more beautiful feeling than knowing you're right.' You get the impression that Clough has experienced that feeling more than most.

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Anne Bennett

Kind Hearts

'The coppers always pick on me and my friends' said Carol, when I was giving her a lift. 'Well, show me your friends and I'll show you who you are' I thought. 'Like to sit in the back Carol?' 'No I'll sit in the front', she said, and, shortly after, the police stopped us and said my car tax was out of date. This sort of thing gives prejudice a good name, I thought, thankfully waving Carol off on her train, and going back to the office to muse over a report about social workers complaining about their jobs. That comes as no surprise as further probing showed that those who had to deal with clients' financial problems (93 per cent) differed from those who wanted to undertake that task (26 per cent).

'God help us all' I thought, answering the phone. 'I found this old fellow in the road' said a man with a posh type of voice that makes me feel ill at ease. 'He seemed to have nowhere to go,' the posh voice went on. 'So I let him stay in a caravan I've got on a piece of land. Well that was a week or so ago and . . .'

'Oh you've grounds to move him on,' I said resignedly, just . . .

'No, no,' he said patiently 'You misunderstand me. He is welcome to stay as long as he likes and I don't want any rent but what I cannot do is persuade him to claim social security benefit.'

A warm glow so suffused me at hearing this kind of remark that I beamed down the phone at him and when he went on to ask if I'd go out to exercise my skill in getting the old man to apply for benefit I cast aside my usual ploy in such cases of passing it on to someone else, and cooed that of course I would and I didn't even wince when he said he lived at Clematis Cottage in the village.

'It does need someone with social work training to get him to apply,' said Mr Roberts, and his wife, a genteel little woman, agreed.

'Clive has done his best' she said.

'Yes yes I have' said Clive modestly.

My faith in my persuasion powers, never strong at the best of times, began to falter.

'I expect you'd like to see him now,' said Clive when it became obvious that I couldn't linger over the teacups much longer. 'I'll fetch him.'

'No that's all right,' I said hastily, 'You tell me where he is and I'll . . .'

'I wouldn't dream of it,' said Mrs Roberts with a shocked look. 'Letting you see him alone I mean . . . I'll come with you.' I think she'd been reading these horror stories on rape. I've never been raped and don't know anyone who has.

'There's a form to fill in', I said with a competent air.

'Yes, form SBI DHSS,' she said promptly. 'Have you one? I have a spare if you haven't.'

'What luck,' I thought. 'Yes I would like it please,' I told her. 'Shall we go?' said Mr Roberts. We went through a farm gate and over a stile. 'I can't see him,' said Mrs Roberts. 'He's usually around.' 'Henreee,' she cried, 'Henreeee.' I looked knowledgeable. 'He may well be the sort who can't settle in one place,' I said. 'Moved on.' 'Not Henry, he wouldn't do that,' said Clive firmly. Wish he had, I thought.

A muffled answer came. We trailed towards the voice which was finally revealed as coming from an old man not shabbily but cheaply dressed and to my jaundiced eye the sort who would have been more at home in the town than in the country. He was doing something or other to a wall.

'Henry,' said Clive, 'this lady has very kindly come to see you and to help you with your problem.'

'Oh Ah,' said Henry.

'Hello Mr James,' I said, straight to the point I thought. 'I understand you don't want to apply for benefit. I . . .' 'That's right,' he said, 'Don't need it. I can manage.' You're entitled to it,' I said. 'Where did you come from, your last address?' 'Hertfordshire I think,' he said. 'Were you in a hostel or something?' I said. (Ah that's it a home, old people.) 'You didn't like it,' I said understandingly. 'They didn't like *me*,' he chuckled. 'Asked me to go. Said I was a bit scratchy.'

'He's probably got a very interesting history' muttered Clive to me. 'Well worth investigating.'

'Undoubtedly,' I agreed. I could just imagine tracing old Henry's trail back through county after county, worker after worker, till I found someone who would accept financial responsibility for him. He could well turn into a long-term client and, if I wasn't careful, mine. 'If I could speak to him alone,' I said confidingly to the Roberts's.

'Look Mr James,' I said, 'For God's sake apply for benefit or Mr Roberts is going to fret and worry about you and think you need social work help and . . .' 'I don't want them poking their noses in my affairs, the DHSS people,' said Henry. 'I can make enough money round here. I can manage.' 'But he thinks you should claim your rights,' I pleaded. 'All you've got to do is fill in a form, answer a few questions, and they will send you a Giro cheque every week. You won't even have to go and get it. They are much too busy to probe into your business. Sign here, I'll fill in the rest.' He signed.

I slithered back over the stile and found Mrs Roberts leaning on a gate. 'Clive will be pleased,' she said. 'He complains of these scroungers having money handed to them whereas good honest types like Mr James don't apply.' He'll get drunk soon enough, I thought.

A donkey ambled up to the gate: there were five or six of them in the field. 'Do they belong to that donkey charity?' I asked her. 'Well no,' she said, 'I keep them. I don't like to think of them being destroyed.' It was very peaceful there. I looked at her, and thought she was not very bright. 'You're very kind,' I said. I tend to believe that to be good you have to be clever. There are occasions when I wonder, though.

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London Diary

☐ In the Nottingham Magistrates Court last week I found myself in the company of a Mr J. Rotten, pale faced, wearing a straw solar topee and with zips curiously placed up the backs of his trouser legs, some quite disapproving magistrates and Professor Kingsley, a charming and learned philologist from Nottingham University. The Professor told us that the word 'bollocks', the subject of the charge against the Sex Pistols' advertising, departed around the 18th century from its standard English meaning and came to mean a 'Rector' and because Rectors frequently talk nonsense (as the Professor, who is also an Anglican priest, smilingly explained) the word came to mean a load of rubbish. Later he told me that in certain Indian languages words that originally meant testicles came to acquire a similar meaning. Can it be that male pigs are less chauvinist than they are reputed to be, and that man's age-old attitude to his sexual equipment has been one of somewhat amused contempt? Those militant feminists who have induced President Carter to refer to Vikings as 'Norsepersons' might perhaps consider if they have been always as modestly disparaging about their own sexuality.

☐ 'Owly' Stable, who sadly died last week, was all that a judge should be, humane, sensible and personally fallible, as on the occasion when he told a jury to make its collective mind up as he wanted to go to dinner. He was also, a rare accomplishment among modern judges, a master of English prose. His judgment in *The Philanderer* case (a book which today seems considerably less offensive and controversial than Enid Blyton) is an elegant and lucid essay on the importance of reflecting the contemporary world in fiction. English literature, Stable told the jury, must not be kept to the level of what is suitable reading for a 14-year-old schoolgirl. Fourteen-year-old schoolgirls have changed since the days of *The Philanderer* case: but so, alas, have judicial attitudes.

☐ It has never seemed to me to matter greatly whether people use as a sedative or social drug, a cushion against the sharper corners of life, gin or grass, cannabis or claret, hock or hashish. All are clearly open to misuse, all are no doubt harmless in moderation. However, my support of the soft drugs lobby received a nasty jolt from a letter in the *Observer* in which a precision engineer said that since taking to pot he had developed humility and thought more of serving his fellow men and giving good value for money to his employees. 'Emotions like jealousy, envy and anger faded into insignificance,' wrote Mr Jon Castleton of London N5, since he had joined all the 'magnificent, deep-thinking young people who follow the same way'. I do find this monumentally pretentious and as boring as the legend, prevalent among the old Hemingway school of writers, that the absorption of vast quantities of bourbon somehow raised man to a heroic stature ('Boy, were we stinking last night at the Club Sirocco! '). I can see nothing wrong in controlled eating, drinking or smoking for pleasure, provided you don't claim it elevates the soul. Or perhaps, as I travel to far-flung law courts up and down England, I should claim that a diet of British Rail sausage rolls brings you in touch with the infinite, or that a Lyons' Individual Fruit Pie and a Newcastle Brown promote gentleness, lack of envy and a more dutiful attitude towards solicitors.

☐ Having recently read the apologia of Jim Slater and discovered that tycoons regard the world as some vast Monopoly board in which they buy and sell for no more reason than the pleasure of the game, I found myself at dinner this week with a more attractive Monopoly player, an ex-builder's labourer, ex-boxer who had been worth £10m., a private jet and a helicopter before the oil crisis struck. But now, he told me, things were looking up, he had just bought 22,000 acres to build a town in South America, and he would soon be back again to 'Go'. It seems an impossible dilemma of our brand of social democracy; the smallest relief (a penny in the pound off tax for most of us) and the Monopoly players are climbing back into their helicopters. No doubt this accounts for Mr Merlyn Rees's total failure to bring a blush to the cheeks of the firemen.

☐ Speaking, if we must, of dinner parties I have always detested the habit of segregating the sexes after the pudding and allegedly leaving the men to dirty jokes. The only joke I ever heard to come out of this situation was an answer to the question, 'Shall we join the ladies' 'Yes, and make one simply enormous lady'. However, I heard that at a recent dinner party Mrs Thatcher sensibly declined to leave with the ladies and sat on imperturbable, claiming the sexless status of a potential Prime-Minister-Person. It seems that her vaguely leftish male companions did nothing to budge her, nor did they entertain her with aged obscenities. They were all too busy angling for jobs in the not too distant future.

☐ The celebration of a quarter of a century of *The Mousetrap* was a stirring ritual. In the centre of a vast room in the Savoy Hotel a group including Mr Callaghan (not the world's most enthusiastic theatre-goer – Uncle Jim has never been noticed down at the National), Jessie Matthews and Dame Vera Lynn sat on a roped-off platform eating lunch. Round them thronged the respectful promenading multitude balancing plates and glasses, giving the function rather the air of a lying-in-state or a shuffling visit to Lenin's tomb. However, I grudge the late Miss Christie none of her undying popularity, the stories are as good as the *The Times* crossword and considerably better written, and I have actually seen *The Mousetrap*. Agatha Christie, by being the world's most popular writer, also finally gave the lie to the theory that books deprave and corrupt; were there an ounce of truth in this notion the libraries of England would be littered with butlers with Malayan knives stuck between their shoulder blades.

☐ Nor do I grudge Mr Callaghan his smoked salmon on the podium; but it is time that this government took its responsibilities to the Arts seriously; took over, for instance, the cost of maintaining the National Theatre building instead of leaving it to be paid for out of a hard pressed Arts Council subsidy, and appointed a minister of cabinet rank for the Arts. This last is the excellent suggestion of Mr Norman St John-Stevas, who made a speech this week which went an inch or two towards reconciling me to government by the potential Prime-Minister-Person. I would only quarrel with Mr Stevas in one respect; he seems to regard television as a disseminator of opera, music and ballet and not as an art form in its own right. To me the single telly play is the only new form for a writer to have emerged since the war, and the only vehicle for an idea of the length which would have made a short story in the days of Kipling, Maugham and the popular magazines. Companies are becoming a little better at supporting the single play, but they may need help to keep this form of drama alive in these days of escalating costs and increasing competition from endless American detective series, where all human beings appear in varying shades of metallic pink and blue, and the streets of Los Angeles look like miles and miles of the outskirts of Slough.

☐ I am also grateful to television, and to Ronald Eyre's brilliant and thoughtful series *The Long Search*, for a thought that has haunted me over the last weeks. It came from Mr Eyre's programme on Judaism, in which we were told by a Jewish writer in New York that we must either love God or hate him, both experiences are equally valuable, but that He must not be ignored. He then told a remarkable story which tells us more, I'm sure, about religion and the human situation in this century than all the sermons preached since the war. It seems that three Rabbis of great learning and erudition sat on a bunk while prisoners in Belsen and held a lengthy and formal trial of God. At the end of three days they reached a unanimous verdict. Guilty.

John Mortimer

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ Five Cambridge art dealers rejected as 'worthless rubbish' a Constable landscape stolen from the city's Fitzwilliam Museum on Tuesday. The sixth, Mr Ernest Hilton, 74, thought the same, but grudgingly paid the £5 asked. – *Daily Telegraph* (Harry Bush)

☐ Nottingham police are looking for thieves who have stolen half a house. The first floor of the house, in Unwin Road, had been completed, but the thieves dismantled all five thousand bricks and loaded them, with two thousand concrete blocks, on to a vehicle. – *The Times* (H. G. Body)

☐ Civil servants are to get a 10 per cent rise in mileage allowances – for their bicycles. – *Southend Evening Echo* (S. Sullivan)

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University Forum

Jeremy Holt*

Lore College

A view of Guildford College of Law may mirror the changes about to take place in legal education. Beside a charming ivy-covered manor house, there stands a gaunt concrete and glass lecture block. The chance to build the two in harmony was missed and the new building, though adequate for its purpose, is a bleak and uninspiring place. The College of Law was formed in 1962 by the amalgamation of the Law Society's School of Law and the tutorial firm of Gibson & Weldon. Granted a Royal Charter in 1975, it has as its object the advancement of legal education. To this end it organises refresher courses for practitioners but by far its main task is to teach students preparing to become solicitors. This is carried on at three branches in Guildford, London and Chester. Practically all solicitors who qualify, pass through one of these institutions at some time. (A minority take correspondence courses or a course at a polytechnic). The first course lasts a year (non-law graduates can take a shorter course). Law graduates are exempt. The second, taken by everyone lasts six months. A period working in a solicitor's office, called 'articles', must also be completed.

England is one of the few countries to maintain a dual system of university and professional law schools. In many of the Common Law, and all the Civil Law countries, a university law degree is a compulsory requirement for entering the profession. The time taken to qualify is shorter in England than in other countries. In America, the 170 law schools (the only institutions teaching law) adopt a comparative approach and teach legal principles rather than our fixed corpus of knowledge.

Law students are a strange breed. They tend to be more conformist than students generally. Landladies in Guildford much prefer to take law students than people from the University of Surrey nearby. Law students share with medical students both the opportunity of continuing in a profession and the tedium of 'shop' jokes. Politically, they tend to be more to the Right than the mass of students. Hence, the NUS has not made any strenuous efforts to recruit members from the Colleges of Law. The last three presidents of the Federation of Conservative Students have all been prospective lawyers. They also come from a comparatively narrow social background. As part of its evidence to the Royal Commission on the Legal Services, the Colleges of Law conducted a survey among its 1686 students. The June edition of *Law Notes*, commenting on the results, said: 'The vast majority . . . are from what may loosely be described as the middle classes.' This tendency is likely to be strengthened by the decision of many local authorities (such as Dorset, Surrey, Croydon and Brent) not to give grants to graduates for a professional law course. Over a quarter of the Part II students do not receive a grant. There is often a family connection with the law. Of the students surveyed 8.8 per cent said that one of their parents was qualified and a further 12.3 per cent said that some other close relative was qualified. Popular mythology has also given the law student other characteristics. In *Sleeper* Woody Allen explains to a robot that the world is divided into two groups, those with sexual feelings and those without, the latter being called lawyers.

The teaching is direly unimaginative. One-and-a-half hour lectures of dictated notes, occasionally including punctuation. Questions are allowed but hold up the flow of the lecture. Once a month there is a test paper (in which Oxford graduates often tend to do particularly badly). The whole course is geared to getting candidates through the Law Society's examinations. At this, the College of Law is quite successful, given the examiners' penchant for setting questions outside the syllabus. About two-thirds of the candidates taught by the College of Law appear in the Pass List. But this is at the cost of strait-jacketed thinking. There is no discussion of possible changes in the law. When dealing with charities, none of the recent three reports on charity law reform is mentioned. The only comments made by lecturers are criticisms of some of the new legislation, such as the Employment Protection Act, Capital Transfer Tax etc. Perhaps the style of teaching helps explain why so many solicitors have such an unquestioning regard for the status quo. Six months at the College of Law can stifle all but the most radical of minds.

Dissatisfaction with the system of legal education and its lack of a strong practical aspect led to the Report of the Committee on Legal Education (chaired by the Hon. Mr Justice Ormrod) in 1971. This suggested that legal education should be divided into an academic part and a practical part followed by a period of service. The proposed system was to be based principally on the law graduate and would have required a wholesale expansion of the university law faculties and the law schools. 'Articles' were to be abolished. The Report was subjected to a barrage of criticism by the legal profession. It was felt to be too idealistic and too costly. Finance by the government might lead to too much control and the profession was not prepared to shoulder the whole cost itself. It was thought to be a mistake to make qualification difficult for the non-law graduate. Articles were seen as essential for practical training and there was little support for their abolition. Revised proposals were put forward by the Law Society in September 1975 and were expanded a year later. Now both sides of the profession will have to take a Common Professional Examination (unless they have a law degree). The Part II examination (at present taken after a course of six months) is to be replaced by a new final examination, based on a nine month course. Attendance at a recognised course will be essential for both examinations.

These reforms, to be introduced in 1979-1980, have received their measure of criticism. There was the usual complaint of lack of consultation. There is the practical difficulty that as there will only be one main final examination each year there will not be a steady supply of articled clerks as most will start work at the same time each year. There remains a strong disincentive to the non-law graduate. A number of the best lawyers in the country, e.g. Lord Scarman, never took a law degree. The new final examination is meant to be more practical, dealing with a solicitor's practice, his business client, his private client and litigation (at present not covered at all) but the full details of the proposed syllabus are not yet available.

Although the transition to the new system is bound to cause some difficulty, broadly speaking the changes are to be welcomed. It would be unwise for the Royal Commission on the Legal Services to recommend any further tinkerings. A mutually recognised professional examination for both sides of the profession will allow people more time to choose which to join and is a small step along the obstacle-strewn road to fusion. It must be hoped that the new final examination, as well as being more practical, will encourage a more questioning approach to the law. There remains the problem of articles, with many articled clerks being woefully underpaid and often used as little more than switchboard operators. The Colleges of Law have been little known institutions in the past (Anthony Sampson makes no mention of them in his *Anatomy of Britain*). The time has come for them to play more of a part in making the law less of an ass.

Jeremy Holt is a student at Guildford College of Law.

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IS TIME RUNNING OUT?

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

Unholy Ghosts

Among the correspondents who have been kind enough, over the last two years, to write to me about this or that, some of them with envelopes bearing 9p stamps and bringing with them an exciting sense of postal urgency, there have so far been only two crosspatches. One, a man, was vexed that 50 years ago I had saved up a month's pocket money (a working man's weekly wage) and had blued the lot on a matinée of *Mercenary Mary*, with tea in the interval and a box of soft centres. Ah well. The other, a woman and American I would think as, on parting, she signed herself merely 'Sincerely', was distressed that I seemed to speak so lightly of the relative ease with which perfectly sensible women are able to get themselves murdered, tip-toeing as they do trustfully within hatchet-range of obvious rotters, accepting lifts in cars belonging to unknowns ('Drop me at Dedham, if you will'), or swigging down a palpably doctored port-and-lemon ('Cheers!'). All I was doing in this case was attempting politely to point out that women are, plainly, far nicer and more honest and more trusting than men. 'Gullible' isn't, somehow, an agreeable adjective, but that's what they are too. 'Credulous' ditto, and in no field more so than in that of seeing, or thinking to see, ghosts. For every one man who claims to have sighted a spirit, there are five women with weirder, spookier tales to tell.

A case in point. I am sometimes fortunate to have at weekends visiting friends gracing what I like to think of as the West Wing of 'Myrtlebank'. There are just the two rooms there which, if not exactly meriting the hotelier's descriptive word 'luxi-bedrooms', do at least have beds and a full tin of biscuits at the side of them (in most other people's houses, there is practically no single moment of the day or of the night when one can't 'manage' a digestive or a petit beurre). Staying with me last year was a married lady, mother of three and the very soul of level-headedness, or so one would have thought, but she came down to Sunday breakfast (9 a.m., for 9.15. Hot dishes. Preserves) in a state of considerable agitation, announcing that, two minutes before, she had seen a ghost. Swiftly calming her with kedgeree and coffee, I begged her to tell all. Gazing from her bedroom window in the misty Devonian morning light and out over the generously-filled rose beds that lead to the gate, she had seen, she said, a little old white-haired lady come floating up the path and who, passing as though by magic through the solid stone house wall, three feet thick, had vanished from sight within the premises. Should we investigate? What could it mean? A death? A dreadful warning of some kind? Had the ghost ever been seen before?

'Indeed yes,' I explained, 'we see her daily. She is fond of sherry and bananas and she has a light hand with pastry. Your ghost is none other than a delightful and devout little Welsh dumpling called Mabel, an ex-nurse billeted on us in Berkshire during the war and now, in retirement and with her nasal probe and kidney dishes finally hung up, making cosy use of the three rooms, superfluous to my needs, in the East Wing of 'Myrtlebank'. She was able to pass through the wall because there is a door there. She has just returned from early service in the village church. Her hair is white because she is 86. Any more questions?'

I do not, mundane and prosaic as I am, much believe in ghosts but I am by no means uninterested in their reported goings-on, in no way astonished to find that the Other Side seems to be every bit as cracked as this. Clergymen, despite that private telephone line to the Great Exchange in the sky, are quite frequently exposed to the most curious and eerie doings. Take, for example, the case of the Rev. Ernest Merryweather, a no-nonsense name if ever there was one, appointed in 1937 to the living of Langenhoe and its church and rectory on desolate and boggy ground amid the Essex marshes. Scarcely had he arrived and tipped the taxi-driver before doors started violently banging, altar flowers leapt from their vases and went flying down the nave, the credence bell clanged continually, and the Merryweather suitcase, dumped ready for clerical action in the vestry, jammed itself tight shut and refused to yield up the freshly laundered vestments within.

Worse was to come. Being graciously shown by the lady of the manor over the manor house, and lingering for a moment at a bedroom window to admire a fine piece of topiary work in the garden below, the Rev. Ernest, happily married and father of five, suddenly found himself being hotly embraced by a naked woman (the lady of the manor, I hasten to add, had gone on ahead, fully draped), with soft arms and softer breasts pressed to his canonicals. Thoroughly unnerved, and determined to be ready for anything, Mr Merryweather pedalled like a lamplighter into Chelmsford and equipped himself with an ornamental dagger, and then guess what! It was snatched from his belt by an unseen hand right in the middle of the collect for today. At all times the church hummed with activity. Repeatedly there was a whiff of out-of-season violets, mysterious women walked through the chancel walls, heavenly voices sang (uninvited, and I should hope so) plainsong, people were heard speaking in French (disgusting!), a woman's voice shouted 'You are a cruel man!', and in between 'whiles, crashes and bangs and shrieks rang out. One can only assume that congregations, unused to such exciting treats, arrived in coachloads from all over East Anglia, as they did for Matins with the Rector of Stiffkey, just off the early morning train from Soho.

We owe these details to Peter Moss who, darting inquiringly about the country, has been collecting the latest spectral news from all over everywhere. Ghosts tend in general to be female and fairly ancient, with scraped back white hair (buns are being worn again). Our highways and trunk roads are being increasingly haunted and I am able to give you, like the BBC's helpful morning announcements of black ice and burst water-mains and jack-knifed lorries, warnings of what to expect. Be particularly careful in the 'Gents' section of the Keele Service Area lavatory on the M6 (a Puritan, in full 17th century rig, standing motionless at the urinal). On the A3081 in Dorset, watch out for a Bronze Age horseman galloping along with very little road sense. The A427 provides a headless bicyclist on dark nights. There's a Victorian ghost child, sucking a toffee apple, on the A30 just this side of Bodmin, a balding bearded widower in green and pink pyjamas on the A279, and a wonky-looking phantom hitch-hiker (keen on lorry drivers) on the A38. To aid the imagination, Mr Moss's excellent book, *Ghosts Over Britain* (Elm Tree Books: £3.95), is strikingly illustrated by Angela Lewer, the surprising encounter in the Keele lavatory being especially vivid.

There has been, goodness me, such a lot going on even away from the roads. In W11, Phaïs Robert was subjected to foetid smells and rhythmic puffs of air. In Chorley hospital, despite an alert staff nurse ('Who has gone to the toilet?'), doors creaked inexplicably open and backless slippers shuffled to and fro. A startled lady called Gay Agnes of Coggleshall found her dead mother sensibly urging her to complete her household chores. A child in Bath was regularly visited by a chummy octogenarian wearing surgical boots. Near Durham, Ben Chicken found himself being stared at in bed by Mrs Chicken's defunct first husband looking reproachful. In Stow-on-the-Wold, large pools of water kept appearing on a polished floor (Pussy and Spot are both completely above suspicion).

In 1957, a Hampshire householder, finding his house haunted, applied to the local council for a reduction in rates. The reduction was granted. This seems to me easily the most improbable happening of all.

CHRIST
and
MARX
Malcolm Muggeridge looks critically at the current dialogue. This week in
THE TIMES
Educational Supplement

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Letters to the Editor

Politics of the Pillory

Sir, Anthony Howard's article (NS 18 November) is in many ways unfair to the Government and seems, in part, to hold an unrealistic attitude towards pay claims.

It appears to be agreed by most commentators that the suggested 10 per cent limit set by the Government for the latest pay round is necessary in order to hold inflation in the coming year. It is also generally accepted that within this limit attempts should be made to restore in some measure the differentials which have been eroded over the past two or three years. It is true that this is as far as the Government allows free collective bargaining – and thus it may be suggested that they have begged the whole question of such bargaining. This, however, does not invalidate the system, nor does the absence of legislation mean that we should indict the Government on a charge of cowardice. Socialists have for years preached government by consent: if we are to believe the latest polls it would appear that the Government has that consent.

It seems inconceivable to me that trade unions affiliated to the Labour Party can be so blind to the needs of the whole commonwealth, can be so concerned with personal gain and material benefit that they do not see the equity that exists if groups accept the limits which will benefit all. And yet we have the police crying 'special case', and the firemen (indeed their wages may not be as high as ideally we should like them to be but we are not in an ideal situation) – and we have Mr Chapple on BBC Radio making an unequivocal threat not only to the Government but to the nation. What is more, he gloried in the fact that he had the economic muscle to bring the country to its knees – and he is a 'moderate'. God protect us from the militants!

Surely Mr Howard's attack should be aimed not at the Government for 'pillorying' trade unions, but at irresponsible trade unionists for terrorising the community and the CBI for being scared to stand up and be counted in the private sector. That is where the real problem is: among the firms who will endorse phony productivity deals in order to buy industrial peace at the expense of international competitiveness, who will change job descriptions so that executives can cheat on the limits, who will give cars and other fringe benefits instead of pay rises and claim in all innocence that they are not infringing the norm.

The only thing the Government can do is to hold firm in the public area (and this hits me in the pocket). Come on, Mr Howard, hit the CBI and the small firms where it hurts them most – in their so-called integrity; *they* are the ones, together with their capitalist side-kicks in the trade unions (I think of Chapple, Scargill, McGahey *et al.*) who deserve your venom, not the Government, who are at least doing their job better than any conceivable alternative could do.

COLIN V. YOUNG.

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Bliss Gate Road
Rock, nr Kidderminster
Worcs.

Sir, It was my intention to write thanking Anthony Howard for his article on the politics of the pillory (NS 18 November), but after reading Canon Collins's nauseating apologia (NS 25 November) I feel a few unpleasant facts would not come amiss. I am a totally disabled person, having lived in a wheelchair for over ten years, and the two terminal diseases from which I suffer make me more than usually sensitive to cold weather. In fact, I am a whole lot more vulnerable to strikes by firemen, miners, or power workers than Canon Collins is, was, or ever will be, and I resent bitterly that he should use 'the disabled' as another pretext for attacking the good, decent working people who have been driven by years of neglect to revolt in a mild way against their helotry. But, then, I have always been a socialist, and I feel sure that their cause is mine. Canon Collins talks of the children without proper food and clothing that he saw in the Thirties. How nice to have been able to 'see' them; I *was* one.

There is still plenty of poverty to be seen by those who look closer to home than Borioboola-Gha, or whichever distant shore Canon Collins is at present honouring with his attention. It may be different in essence from the poverty of the 1930s, as that was from the poverty of the 1830s, but it is no less real for that. One would have though that a churchman above all would know that socialism is not just about human life, but about its quality too.

PAT HANCOX

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London SW13

The Eye of Greece

Sir, All due apology to the Greek Embassy, represented with such disarming courtesy by its press officer Mr Peter Thompson, for my error in the exact title of Mr Karamanlis's political party (NS 18 November). But no marks, Mr Thompson, for seeing this as 'a single fact in a page of waffle'. Waffle of course it may have been, by the standards of those who find fulfilment in the job of press officer, but it had plenty of facts to offer; among them being the truly astonishing apathy (Mr Thompson hasn't heard of the apathy) displayed by the unfortunate Greek electorate in the ear-splitting din of the streets, and the stoicism with which they ate their dinners in cafés throbbing with the party political broadcasts we can so happily switch off. Mr Thompson and I may not mean the same thing by apathy (a Greek word, by the way), but to the *OED* and myself it means insensibility to suffering. These were facts, not 'atmosphere': though they don't need, and clearly wouldn't get, official approval at the Greek Embassy. Another fact was the presence of deadpan little groups of temporarily halted passers-by under the numerous balconies from which the candidates or their barkers were bellowing at whole neighbourhoods. These were not groups of Greeks 'given back their self-respect'.

As for the 'flag-waving multitudes', 100,000 at a time, they are just the kind of thing I usually notice. Sorry to have missed them. What no one could miss was the muck in the streets, another fact I shall never forget. The only interested comment I actually heard from a Greek (he keeps a taverna in Piraeus) was 'For God's sake, how long does it all go on?'

C. H. ROLPH

Rushett Edge
Bramley
Guildford

Doctors and Diseases

Sir, The correspondence generated by Donald Gould's article on the NHS (NS 28 October) can in many respects be seen as symptomatic of the increasing anxiety and confusion surrounding the question of whether we, as a nation, have a workable approach to promoting health or whether we are simply in the business of treating illness.

Two of your correspondents (Mr Wyman and Ms Crossley) seem to think that Donald Gould's article represents an 'attack' on the NHS. And while, on cursory reading, his message might be construed in this way, a closer reading suggests the opposite conclusion. The pressures to consume more, to drive more (and often faster), to rely on cigarettes and alcohol as 'socially acceptable tranquillisers', and many of the other pressures associated with day-to-day life in industrialised societies, are pressures that are killing us. We suffer from what might be called 'the manufacture of illness'. As a result, rather than having a National Health Service, we have what in many respects might be more accurately called a national *repair* service. Moreover, because of the slow and sometimes imperceptible development of many of our manufactured diseases (e.g. many forms of heart disease), acute symptoms often appear suddenly and attempts to 'salvage' or 'repair' people once this has occurred are quite often – and quite understandably – relatively ineffective.

But this is not, in essence, an attack on the National Health Service. In very many ways, the NHS is simply responding to the 'disease burden' we have imposed upon it, and indeed, it would seem to provide reasonably good value for money by comparison with the repair services in many other industrialised countries. No, Donald Gould is not attacking the health service; rather, he is trying to draw attention to the 'anti-health' character of the environment within which the NHS has evolved and which today creates many of the problems the NHS is expected to address. The real focus of Donald Gould's attack is on society and in particular, on our reluctance

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to look seriously at the conditions which create 'ill-health' and on our lack of political will to do anything about them.

Your third correspondent, Michael Quinton, seems to recognise this and suggests that Community Health Councils are potentially very important allies in the struggle to bring about a '. . . fundamental change . . . in our approach to health care'. This is undoubtedly true: fortunately, however, there are many other potential allies. For example, there are those concerned with the problems of pollution and conservation of the natural environment, those concerned with ecological questions and the squandering of scarce resources, and equally, those concerned with a more responsible approach to international development questions and the problems of poverty and starvation in the Third World. They are allies, for like those who would like to see manufactured illnesses tackled at their source, they are concerned to bring about a transition toward a society where *more* production and *more* consumption are not the over-riding social goals. The approach to health advocated by Donald Gould is simply a part of this wider struggle for change.

PETER DRAPER
GORDON BEST

Unit for the Study of Health Policy
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Le style c'est l'homme

Sir, Richard Cobb in his review of Alistair Horne (NS 18 November), criticises Horne for 'a style borrowed from *Time* magazine'. Pots *v.* kettles. His own owes a lot to ***Private Eye.*** 'The futile Bidault,' '. . . the infamous Mollet . . ' plus which you have to speak Algerian *argot* to know what in hell he's on about. '. . . how could a *métallo* . . . *afford* to be an *insoumis*??? You have me there, Cobb.

'He . . . draws heavily on a boring American woman [*Private Eye* again] called Janet Flanner.' From Paris Janet Flanner has written the *Genet* pieces for the *New Yorker* for over 30 years. If Horne did 'draw heavily' on her, it's because she's one of the best foreign correspondents there is. There's more corn on the Cobb. A man who can write 'the impenetrable *casbah*,' straight out of *Pepe-le-Moko*, is in no position to criticise Horne for 'too much flannery'.

LARRY ADLER

9 Rothwell Street
London NW1

Degrees of Failure

Sir, Mr Barber's account (Letters 25 November) of our request to the Council of University College, Cardiff, to expel him is characteristic of the attitude he has held since November 1974 to this institution and its lecturers. He has made every effort to discredit them.

The worth of his reference to his public apology for 'emotive' language (4 November) may be gauged from the fact that since then he has claimed 'personal discrimination' (*South Wales Echo* 8 November), is reported to have said 'he stood by his claim he had been victimised' (*Western Mail* 9 November), and in his letter to you talks of 'blatant victimisation'. His charges of unfairness and irregularities have not been withdrawn and he must understand that only if he can substantiate these can our efforts to defend ourselves and our colleagues from what we regard as entirely unfounded charges be regarded as 'victimisation'.

Mr Barber says the College has allowed an attempt to expel him 'without even investigating such allegations'. That is untrue. Academic and administrative staff at every level in the College have inquired into them but Mr Barber has never produced the slightest evidence in substantiation, even though he has been in possession of a mark list. Even now the College Council has instituted an investigatory committee to ascertain the facts before coming to a decision on expulsion. We have appeared before it. Mr Barber has failed to appear in spite of two invitations. The Students Union declares that it cannot recognise this committee, although it consists of two lay members of Council, a member of the academic staff and a student.

This failure to recognise the Committee expresses the same attitude which produced the allegations in the first place. Mr Barber has never accepted the judgment of his lecturers but has chosen to abuse them instead.

We consider that there can be no obligation on the institution to continue with his teaching when the fundamental basis of the contract between student and staff has been so grossly infringed. Indeed, if Mr Barber genuinely holds the views he expresses, it is difficult to see why he should wish to obtain a degree from this Department and Faculty. We consider university teachers to have the same rights as any other occupational group to defend themselves and to reject impossible and demeaning conditions of work.

M. C. ALBROW
Dean of the Faculty of Economic and Social Studies
P. D. ANTHONY
Acting Head of the Department of Industrial Relations

University College
Cardiff

Bare Knees

Sir, Arthur Marshall is nearer the truth than Dr G. M. Watson (Letters 25 November) in ascribing (NS 11 November) a sexual rather than a medical reason to the prohibition of bare knees for footballers at Victorian Clifton. But it was not, in fact, Dr Percival who decreed thus: it was his successor-but-one, Canon Glazebrook, who made this rule around 1891 at just the time when Percival, by now headmaster of Rugby, was introducing a similar rule there, and when we find the Haileybury rules (1886) stating, 'Bare legs are not to be exposed at games'. What is extraordinary is that during his Clifton headship in the 1860s and 1870s, Percival had showed no signs of this future obsession with such possibilities of sexual temptation, and showed great naïveté' in promoting contacts between his Clifton sixth-formers and the proselytising homosexual J. A. Symonds. The reasons for the developing obsession which was to haunt schoolmasters from the 1880s on (and led to sudden and bewildering sex purges at Cheltenham and at Arthur Marshall's own Oundle in that period) are fully treated in my newly-published *Tom Brown's Universe.* Needless to say, these new fears had important consequences for the organisation of schools, as well as determining the attitudes of whole generations of their pupils.

Dr Watson's informant, Dr V. W. Low, had not been a pupil at Clifton, and we have contrary evidence from witnesses who were. How far the connection between tetanus and the soil was established medical knowledge by 1891 is a matter on which Dr Watson will know much more than I.

J. R. de S. HONEY

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Durham

Never Made Passes

Sir, I am intrigued, and a little more so, by Natasha Spender (NS 25 November) finding as clinching evidence of Raymond Chandler's 'homosexuality' the fact that 'for all the jolly talk he didn't ever make the slightest advance to any of us nor to any of our friends'. In many of the societies which inhabit this our globe, Sir, Mr Chandler's conduct might be lauded as that of a decent and honourable gentleman.

But even in our own Western society of changing values, could not the fact of the matter be that Mrs Spender and all her friends (fair and beautiful though I am sure they are, bereft as I am of their acquaintance) were not such as to tempt Mr Chandler's fancy? The missing evidence we indeed need, if the matter is to be cleared up, is that of Mr Chandler's conduct towards *Mr* Spender and *his* friends. If he was not making 'the slightest advance' in that direction, are we not capable to conclude that he was truly a repressed heterosexual?

F. CHATTERJEE.

Bow
London E3

Bank Queues

Sir, Like Crucifer (London Diary, 25 November) I seem to have the knack of choosing the wrong queue in banks – and, just as irritatingly, in post offices. Some banks in Scotland (and, for all I know, in England too) get round this problem by having their customers queue alongside one of the walls. As soon as a space at the counter becomes vacant, the first person in the queue steps forward. A simple solution, but it works.

IAIN PATERSON

11 Mistletoe Road
Yateley
Camberley
Surrey

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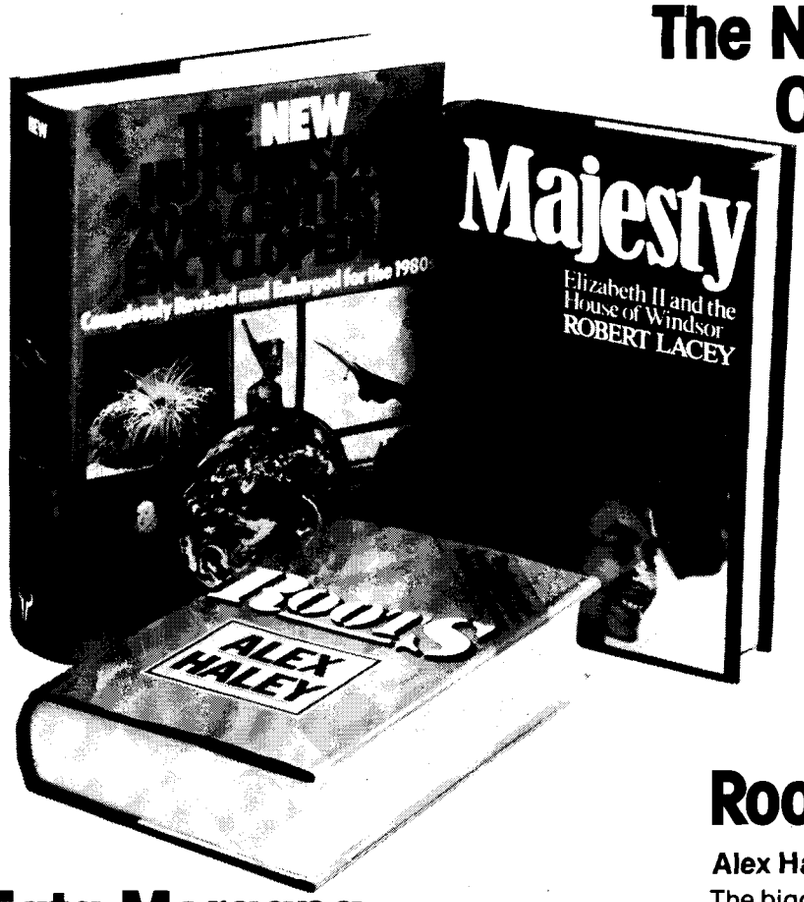

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CHRISTMAS BOOKS–2

James Fenton

Making History

Napoleon and the Restoration of the Bourbons by T. B. MACAULAY edited by Joseph Hamburger *Longman* £11.95
Macaulay and the Whig Tradition by JOSEPH HAMBURGER *Chicago* £12.25
The Letters of T. B. Macaulay: Volume 4 edited by Thomas Pinney *Cambridge* £19.50
Horatius by T. B. MACAULAY illustrated by Nicholas Garland *Duckworth* £3.95

In September 1830, a few weeks after the revolution which placed Louis Philippe on the throne of France, Macaulay was in Paris observing the scene, and fizzing, absolutely fizzing with rage. It was all because of Lord Brougham. Macaulay had agreed with Macvey Napier, the editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, that he would produce two lengthy articles on the recent events in France. Now Brougham, a senior contributor to the paper, had insisted on taking precedence: *he* wanted to write about France, therefore he *would* write about France; if Macaulay wanted to do something for the next issue, why didn't he review Brougham's recent anti-slavery speech? Napier wrote embarrassedly to Macaulay and cancelled the commission. There was nothing else he could do. Macaulay responded by resigning from the *Review*.

The resignation was soon withdrawn, but the vehemence of Macaulay's feelings towards Brougham remained. They were the feelings of a young man of 29, sensible of his genius, and acutely aware of the disadvantages of his position as a new MP. He was beholden to great men, and at the mercy of their arrogant whims. He was an ardent proponent of reform; yet he spoke as the member for Calne, the rottenest of rotten boroughs. He was deeply obliged to Brougham, and yet it was Brougham who, Macaulay thought, had jealously blocked his way to the editorship of the *Edinburgh Review* (a position to which, considering the distinction of his contributions to that paper, he may fairly be said to have been entitled). Too proud to go 'hawking my rejected articles along Paternoster Row', he took up a previous offer from a certain Dionysius Lardner, the George Weidenfeld of his day, to write a history of France from the restoration of the Bourbons to the accession of Louis Philippe for the *Cabinet Cyclopaedia*. It is this unfinished work which is now published for the first time.

Why was it unfinished? It was certainly a serious undertaking. Macaulay had put a lot of thought and research into it, and had sent the completed portion to the publishers, who set it up in type. The book was announced in advance, and its non-appearance caused some satirical public comment. But I suspect that as the original impetus for the work (the fury at Brougham) receded, a doubt arose in Macaulay's mind. It would have been his first signed work, and his first book. But was he yet ready to write a book? Macaulay always distinguished between his essays, which he genuinely considered ephemeral, and the composition of the real thing, History. In the essays he was able to give scope to his polemical gift. His style may seem to us to be the last word in nobility, but to him it had a license when it appeared within the buff and blue covers of the *Review*, a license that would be inappropriate in a serious book.

What we find, then, on these 89 octavo pages, is a slightly restrained version of the early Macaulay. There are fine moments, and new insights into his thinking, but one can also see – *just* see – why the author might have been dissatisfied. Napoleon, for instance, was a great challenge to Macaulay's gifts, and draws forth some resonant observations:

> During the campaign of 1813, a gust of wind disarranged the map which he was consulting; he dashed it to the ground in a paroxysm of rage. On another occasion, a dog barked at the heels of his horse; he drew his pistol, and fired at the animal which annoyed him: the shot missed, and he flung the pistol away. We may laugh at the spoiled child who beats the ground on which it has fallen; but in a leader of six hundred thousand soldiers, and the sovereign of fifty million subjects, such bursts of senseless fury are a matter for any thing but laughter.

The comparison of the spoiled child is quintessentially Macaulay. He returned again and again, throughout his work, to the state of childhood, which held for him a peculiar fascination. The childishness of Napoleon was part of what Macaulay saw as a perversion of great powers:

> When, at the close of the war, the French prisoners were set at liberty in England, it was in vain that the people of the towns through which they were conveyed tried to bribe them to cry, 'Long live the Bourbons!' They obstinately answered, 'Long live the emperor!' None but a great man could have inspired so strong an attachment; none but an unfeeling and selfish man would have so cruelly abused it.

The barely submerged Latinity of this last sentence may seem to be typical of the historian's style; it is the sort of prose which classical sixth-formers have for years been asked to turn back into the dead language which inspired it. And yet Macaulay knew that this sort of writing represented a dangerous temptation to him. It was too redolent of Gibbon, whom he would read half in admiration, and half with his appetite nauseated and cloyed. Deep as his classical learning was, Macaulay never forgot that he was writing English, not Latin. That is why he is, among stylists, the master of the short sentence. That is why he praised Bunyan, and found so much of Dr Johnson ludicrous.

It is exciting to be able to read this 'lost' work, and to speculate on the reasons for its abandonment. Macaulay has attracted a large amount of the best American scholarship, and we are offered here by Joseph Hamburger (who with his son discovered the proofs in the Longman archives) a clean and elegant edition, with the appropriate amount of explanation and comment. About Professor Hamburger's own book I am less enthusiastic. To be blunt, it's rather boring. It's not very well written: 'A great deal is learned about a political outlook by knowing whether it hopefully cultivates aspirations for high achievements or more modestly aims to avoid disaster – whether it is animated by optimism and vision or by foreboding and nightmare.' In framing this, his first sentence, the professor might have paused over that word 'knowing'. A great deal is learned by finding things out, not by knowing them already. A bad start. It is, however, interesting to see an emphasis placed on the pessimistic side, the darker aspect of Macaulay's thinking. Too often one is asked to see Macaulay as a prophet of idiotic optimism, the embodiment of Victorian bourgeois complacency.

This is partly because we have had until recently only a somewhat censored account of his life. The letters and journals were not published in full, because the Trevelyan family hated the idea that the Lytton Stracheys of the world would mock Macaulay for his intense love of his sisters. Today there has arisen a public which has no bone to pick with Macaulay – he has not been so brutally shoved down our throats at school. We therefore approach his chapter without any naughty-naughty Bloomsbury glee. John Clive's biography and Thomas Pinney's edition of the letters (both of them so far incomplete) have enabled us to see Macaulay more clearly than has ever been possible before. The letters, of which two more volumes are planned, are obviously beyond the pocket of a sane man, but they are marvellously produced and brimful of interest.

From my point of view, the interest is chiefly literary. Macaulay stands at the end of the divided tradition of Romanticism. There were two strands: on the one hand, the perception of nature as sublime; on the other hand, the historical interest. Both cooperated in the 18th century, but by the early part of the 19th century they had tended to split. There were Byron and

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Scott in the historical tradition. Wordsworth dominated the nature cult. The historical cult had initiated both genuine and bogus productions. There was Chatterton and Macpherson's Ossian on the bogus side. There was Percy's *Reliques* on the genuine side. Scott bought the *Reliques* with the first shillings he could muster. Macaulay was indifferent to Wordsworth, but he admired Scott to distraction. He wrote at an early age outlining his ambition to bring to historiography the same attitude which Scott had displayed towards history in his novels. Scott had shamed the scientific historians by his attention to the apparently insignificant detail – he was in our terms the first social historian. Macaulay's great project, from the start, was to write a history of England which would be the equivalent of the romantic novel. It would have that kind of immediacy and verve.

It is clear from the letters that this ambition became fully formulated during the time in India. It was then that Macaulay came to see vividly that (a) politics was not his great vocation, (b) history was, and (c) his powers as a poet and literary critic were limited. He had an exaggerated sense of his limitations. He refused, for instance, to review Lockhart's life of Scott, on the grounds that he had no gift for literature (he had been reading Lessing's *Laocoon*, and was feeling inadequate). But he had one literary work under his belt, and that was the *Lays of Ancient Rome*. It was with this book that he first published under his own name.

He had conceived the idea at the foot of the Neilgherry Hills; 'and most of the verses were made during a dreary sojourn at Ootacamund and a disagreeable voyage in the Bay of Bengal'. The idea was to reconstruct the kind of primitive heroic poetry which, he believed, had been the source of Livy's history. It was to bear the same sort of relation to Golden Latin literature as Percy's *Reliques* bore to Shakespeare and Milton. *Horatius*, the most famous of the poems, was written in a stanza which Macaulay thought at least similar to early Latin poetry. And its success was colossal. Macaulay attributed this to the fact that the public had had enough of bad imitations of Wordsworth. 'A plain chop,' he wrote, 'is sure to be acceptable to a man who has been long fed with stale pastry from a second-rate confectioner's.' But having risked his reputation with the *Lays* he decided he would not try again: he would, 'like a wise gamester, leave off while I am a winner, and not cry Double or Quits.'

I had intended to say that the new edition of *Horatius*, always a popular poem with children, had been very beautifully illustrated by NS cartoonist Nicholas Garland. I had intended to say that in producing it, my landlord and friend had solved, at a stroke, your Christmas book problem this year. I had intended to say that it is very good value for money, and an honoured addition to my Macaulay shelf. However, I find that on refusing to review that Brougham anti-slavery speech Macaulay wrote: 'It is in vile taste for men united in one literary undertaking to exchange these favours.' I shall, therefore, say no more, but leave you to judge for yourself.

John Sturrock

The Thought That Counts

The Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought edited by Alan Bullock and Oliver Stallybrass *Collins* £7.95 and *Fontana* £2.95

The Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought is designed as a portable glossary to the received ideas of our too thoughtful times, the sort of crib a dutiful, less than polymathic guest might like to have on his lap, let us say, during lunch with George Steiner, against the moment when his inhibitingly curious and fleet-witted host soars away on a reconnaissance of the present state of human knowledge. For now modern thought, that large, exclusive and volatile domain, has been cut cruelly down to size, to the definitions of 'some 4,000 key terms'. Key terms are not the whole of thought, modern or ancient, but they are its social currency: the *Dictionary* contains that part of modern thought which shows, the phraseology we can call on in order to feign omniscience or to nod wisely when closeted with real experts. Master its contents and we should still be in the dark over the substance of modern thought, but we should be terrors when it comes to conversation about it.

The preface goes out of its way to share with us the unquestionably human story of how the work was inspired. Lord Bullock, one of its two editors, was on holiday in Portugal, reading not escapist trivia of the kind lesser men jump at when on holiday, but the *TLS*. He came upon the word 'hermeneutics' in a review in that uncompromising paper and realised he wasn't certain what it meant. Decent dictionaries being thin on the ground in Portugal, he was helpless; but, fired by the revelation that lexically he was out of date, he drew up a list of other voguish technicalities which specialists use as much to bully as instruct us. That original, personal list is the useful thin book one can sense trying to get out from this inconsistent, overweight one.

The *Dictionary* works only in part. It works for just as long as it sticks to those fields of human speculation where there is an objective body of thought open to objective definition. This is very obviously the case with philosophy, and if the terms you want to look up are *Categorical Imperative* or *Gödel's Theorem*, then the *Dictionary* is most helpful. The philosophical entries are the work of Anthony Quinton, and they are masterly. They are short, clear and polished and do not, as other entries do, define one key term enragingly in terms of other key terms, so setting the user off on a demoralising circuit of the book in search first of enlightenment and then of an exit. Quinton does not let his own philosophical beliefs or predilections show: he has done his allotted part responsibly and well. So have other contributors: H. L. A. Hart on legal concepts, the late Maurice Freedman on anthropological ones.

If only all the subjects covered in the *Dictionary* had been as clear-cut as these, and all the scholars writing in it as self-effacing. But as one leaves the sciences for the arts, the authoritativeness of the definitions sinks, bottoming dismally out with literature. They remain modern all right, but many of them no longer define what one ordinarily thinks of as thought. *Queuing theory* (there really is one, Sainsbury's checkout girls might like to know, 'for determining the best way of serving queues'), *penis envy* and *continental drift*: they are the very stuff of a book like this, surprising, quotable notions well worth a place in the layman's vocabulary. They have nothing in common that I can see with *Polaris, Newsom Report, the* or *Liverpool Poets, the,* which are none of them surprising, quotable or even notions. They are, if anything, events, and the second and third of them events of lasting unimportance. They may have connections with modern thought – as what hasn't? – but they are hardly historic contributions to it.

The *Fontana Dictionary* claims to have the edge over other dictionaries because its definitions come served with their background. In practice this means that its narrow columns are stiff with the names of those individuals deemed by the editors to have helped in the moulding of the modern mind. They felt, perhaps, that the *Dictionary* would be a friendlier place for the presence of all these human beings, and that a conspectus of modern thought has a duty to identify hordes of modern thinkers. Yet this would have been both a more economical and a more dignified book if it had been based on the opposite principle, that it's the thought that counts, not the name of the thinker. Some great names there are bound to be, but we should have been spared the majority of the spear-carriers recorded here.

They get in the way; so much so that this is more a cross-reference book than a simple reference book. I entered my copy at random, as is my way, and at the letter W. Of the 20 entries on that page two actually tell you something – if only about *Wall Street* and a defunct Egyptian nationalist party called *Wafd*. The remaining 18 entries lead bleakly to the words 'see under' and refer you to some other department of the *Dictionary*. It may be unlikely, but supposing you came to the book in search of *Wallace, Henry* (US politician): you will find him mentioned, far from centrally, under *Progressive,* having once started a political party of that title. Or if the man you seek is *Walsh, Don* (US oceanographer), you must 'see under *Bathysphere*' – where he will doubtless be scraping off the barnacles.

Fifteen of the twenty key terms on my specimen page turn out to be the names of thinkers great or small – but mostly small. No one in his senses would want to exclude *'Wagner, Richard* (German composer), see under *Atonal Music, Gesamtkunst-*

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werk, Neo-Classicism, Romanticism', but he should object to having to hurry straight on down *to 'Wain, John* (British poet, novelist and critic), see under *Movement, the*', a directive few will care to act on. There are limits but, on the literary side, the *Dictionary* has little idea where they lie. It can be parochial: has the adjective *Forsterian* ever been applied to anyone or anything except E. M. Forster? It can be fantastic: *Lolita Syndrome* is less a well-known compulsion in middle-aged men than a whim of Martin Seymour-Smith's (the contributor responsible).

The 'see-under' syndrome – and that *is* a genuine complaint, believe me – ascends to its weird climax with the entry for Russell, Bertrand Arthur William, 3rd Earl (British mathematician and philosopher). He has been scattered to the surrounding landscape, carved into more pieces than the luckless god Osiris, and the Isis who would rebuild him will have to

> see under *Analysis*; *Analytic Philosophy*; *Axiomatic Method*; *Axiomatics*; *CND*; *Common Sense*; *Entailment and Implication*; *Formalism*; *Gödel's Theorem*; *Logic*; *Logical Atomism*; *Logical Types, Theory of*; *Logicism*; *Mathematical Logic*; *Modal Logic*; *Neutral Monism*; *Paradox*; *Set Theory*; *Syndicalism*.

But Russell, being a real thinker, would have appreciated his distribution among so many beautiful abstractions. He might have felt torn, however, faced by the asceticism of the *Dictionary*'s most disappointing item: '*cleavage*, see under *Embryology*'.

Philip French

The Aristocats

The Walt Disney Biography by BOB THOMAS *New English Library* £9.50
Bud and Lou by BOB THOMAS *W. H. Allen* £5.50

For over 30 years Bob Thomas has covered Hollywood for the Associated Press, and for the past ten he has been making his inside knowledge available through a series of biographies and 'co-authored' autobiographies. His best book to date is his life of Columbia's monstrous mogul, Harry Cohn, which was only the second critical biography of a Hollywood tycoon to appear, the first being Bosley Crowther's study of Louis B. Mayer. As a long-serving agency reporter Thomas combines three journalistic qualities, anonymity, speed and discretion, which is why Noah Dietrich turned to him to knock into shape his apparently unpublishable memoir of Howard Hughes (in its raw form a prime research source for Clifford Irving), and why Disney Studios sought his services when they needed an official biographer.

Bob Thomas's account of Disney's progress from Twain-like Middle-Western boyhood to immortality is slick hagiography. But Thomas knows another, nastier side of Hollywood and this he reveals in his depressing account of the rise and fall of Bud Abbott and Lou Costello. If the Disney book is a flattering oil-painting for the boardroom, *Bud and Lou* is a smudgy charcoal sketch from the same atelier.

To middle-aged moviegoers like myself, Disney and Abbott and Costello are the people who most diverted us during the early war years. The only daytime air-raid warning I now remember came during a performance of *Pinocchio* at the Liverpool Rialto, when the manager appeared on stage to invite members of the audience to join him in the basement shelter (few did, preferring the terrors of the film); *Fantasia* was something seen in Leeds when one changed trains as an itinerant evacuee. Abbott and Costello offered occasions to be bicycled to *en famille*, first with foster parents in Yorkshire, then with real parents on Merseyside, leaving by daylight, returning home in the blackout with dim front-lights. The titles *Hold That Ghost, In the Navy, Rookies, Keep Em Flying, Ride Em Cowboy* have a peculiar magic still, and there always seemed to be new Abbott and Costello films, with the pair going through much the same routines in elaborately varied surroundings.

Only much later did one discover the discrepancy in their fortunes. For Disney these years were a period of peculiar tribulation, driving him and his organisation to the verge of bankruptcy. For Abbott and Costello the early Forties were a time of astonishing prosperity that turned them in two years from struggling artists on the burlesque circuit to the most popular comedians in the English-speaking world.

The patrician Franklin Roosevelt loved them equally and they served him well. Disney's *Three Little Pigs* had been a morale-booster of early New Deal days, and during the war the studio produced at its own expense such propaganda pictures as *Victory Through Air Power*. For their part Abbott and Costello nearly killed themselves (quite literally) on record-breaking war bond drives, and entertained the ailing President himself with the corny classic 'Who's on First?' routine. Ironically enough they also moved to the far right in the post-war years. Disney became a supporter of the witch-hunting Motion Picture Association for the Preservation of American Ideals, and (through his visionary projects) an authoritarian thinker of a potentially highly dangerous – because apparently benevolent – kind. The little fat Lou Costello became a fervent McCarthyite and forced everyone on his personal staff to sign a ludicrous loyalty oath, a demand that lost him the services of his best writer.

The Walt Disney Biography is a glossy package that for all its access to family archives lacks the insight of Richard Schickel's unauthorised study (which was

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denied permission even to put Mickey Mouse on the cover) or the technical interest of Christopher Finch's study of Disney's art. Only occasionally do we get some greater insight into the man – as when his grandchildren pleaded during a thunderstorm: 'Turn it off, Grandpa.' The story entranced him, but its moral lay beyond his comprehension. What Thomas does not understand is that Disney, the Middle-Western genius with the commonplace vision, lost his artistic nerve before the organisation he had created was turned by television and then Disneyland into an empire.

Disney differed from every other studio founder in Hollywood in one simple way – he had a creative talent, while they never had an original creative idea in their lives. But a whole series of California dreamers preceded Disney, and he belongs firmly in a tradition of New World utopianism. One can even see affinities with Huey Long, whose Southern fairyland territory he invaded with the posthumously opened Disney World in Florida, where every man could think himself king.

One emerges from this success story deeply depressed, which was hardly Thomas's intention. Paradoxically, one finishes the sketchy, simply produced *Bud and Lou* curiously elated, because Thomas has, despite himself, presented these two forgotten second-raters as a pair of tragic comedians. The tall straight-man Abbott (1895-1974), raised by show-biz parents in Coney Island, didn't team up with the 'ba-a-a-ad boy' Costello (1906-59) until 1936, and shortly after they became movie stars he agreed to his partner's outrageous demand that they split their fees unevenly, the little man getting 60 per cent. Though the straight-man may have slapped the diminutive comedian around on stage, the economic aggression backstage went the other way. However, when during their act the little Lou was invited to punch Abbott, he hit him hard in the solar plexus – the audiences never knew it, but this was their way of preventing the onset of one of Abbott's epileptic fits. In 1959 the alcoholic Abbott leaned on his dead partner's coffin, adding to the burden of his fellow pallbearers.

Walt Disney always wanted to do better work but was restrained by his businessman brother Roy, his bankers and the Hollywood ethos, and his art was channelled in various plausible directions, most notably technical virtuosity, cultural totalitarianism and the pre-packaging of dreams. The constraints on Abbott and Costello were of a different kind. They kept Universal studios afloat for years, but nobody there respected their art or tried to develop it. The status-conscious studio chiefs denied them larger budgets, preferring to squander the money on prestige productions, and the two comedians never overcame their sense of inferiority and indeed almost came to despise their own work. Eventually, having gambled much of their money away, they were crucified by the inland revenue, living and dying apart and heavily in debt. An Abbott and Costello cult might spring up – their early films are certainly superior to the later Marx Brothers movies from the same period – but it's doubtful. Their careers are the stuff that sad novels are made of, not enduring legends.

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Russell Davies

Winter Draws

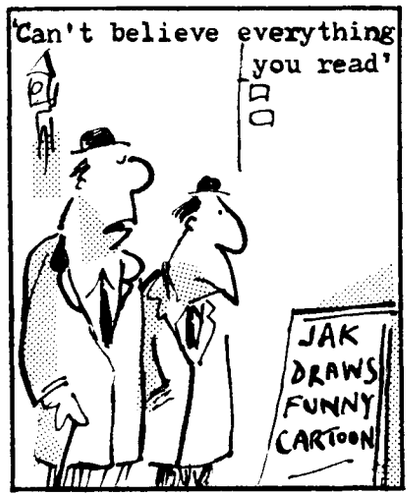
Why is it that political cartoonists are, on the whole, so unsparkling just now, when invention seems to be reaching a peak among the joke boys? The world of politics cannot be said to be dull, even though history currently insists on repeating itself at a grotesque rate. Some political faces, I suppose, are dull at the moment. Mrs Thatcher is really a target for aural satirists (don't give up, Yarwood); if drawn, she must be done in colour, for that awful powder blue effect. Callaghan, who is tricky but not really boring, defeats all but a couple of our artists. Several of them seem hardly to be able to distinguish him from Richard Crossman. Foot's head is depicted either as a frightened chimney-brush, or, in its better-combed moments, as a pekingese with a pair of glasses where the snout ought to be.

The shape alone is considered a likeness of Cyril Smith. Any old skeleton with velour lapels and a little squashed hat captures Jeremy Thorpe. I suppose deadlines keep getting tighter and tighter as the 'old technology' gets older, but it's not really good enough, is it?

I propose a wholesale swop between the political men and their *Punch*-drunk rivals. Trog will swop with Bill Tidy, and produce *The Troggies*. Tidy will take over *Flook (o' the North)*. Reg Smythe will hiccup his way gently into the *Times* Diary slot, and Marc must be set to work at once drawing Andy Capp.

The decreasingly bearable 'Peanuts' needs a shot of the characteristic pungent odour of Larry. Schulz can take a rest. He can afford one.

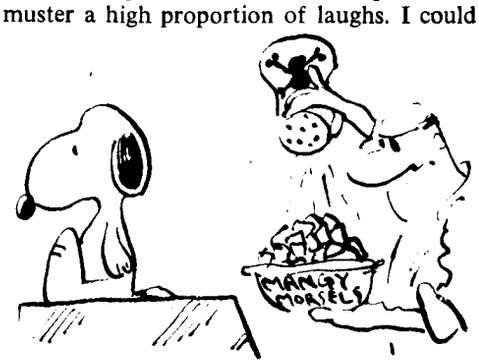
It would be heartless to put McAllister of the *Guardian* anywhere else. He can scarcely hold a pen as it is. His front-page commentary-jokettes have a good rate of success in terms of ideas, but a style of draughtsmanship that borders on the moronic. McAllister's standard set-up, repeated some 21 times in his newly published collection (*Little Boxes*, Guardian Newspapers, 95p), is two city gents looking at a newspaper-vendor's placard. One of them passes a remark and the other one listens, displaying the dopeyest face in cartoons today.



would hardly be an exaggeration. The suggestion of Big Ben in the background is about as perfunctory as my version here.

A cartoonist whose pen sometimes seems even wilder – though having got the hang of him, I rather prize him now – is David Myers, whose work appears both in this year's *Pick Of Punch* (Hutchinson £4.50) and in William Hewison's extended essay on joke art, *The Cartoon Connection* (Elm Tree Books £5.50). Myers is one of the fashionable breed of jokesters who pretend they can't draw, or need to be five parts pissed before they can bear to try. But his funny-bad drawings always register the required impression, which makes them automatically good. He draws everything with complete recklessness and huge feet, and is the obvious man, I should say, to move in on Maudie Littlehampton. Under Myers's misdirection, she would come out roughly

but perhaps that's not roughly enough. Maudie is not on the greatest form in Osbert Lancaster's *The Social Contact* (John Murray £1.25), where an Arab calling the faithful to prayer from the top of the Dorchester is the unsurprising norm. The Hewison book, incidentally, shows the author's talent for cartoon editorship in a good light; the drawings that illustrate his points do muster a high proportion of laughs. I could



have done without traditional bloomers like 'sacreligious' and 'a certain strata of society' in his earnest text; but his tracing of the rise of the 'modern' inconsequential cartoon from a Paul Crum effort of 1937 makes a pleasant change from the well-known *New Yorker* lineages.

Best buy of the season would certainly be *The World of Trog* (Robson Books £3.25) if only its layout were not so unsatisfying and the monochrome printing so terribly inadequate to the virtues of Wally Fawkes's

large-scale colour work. *Punch* should publish these itself, in proper glossy plates. *Fougasse* (Elm Tree Books £4.50) is a very neat volume by comparison, but of course Fougasse himself was a preternaturally crisp performer; his drawings, especially the posters, are not so much cartoons as little objects – and lo, the introduction to this book comes from Bevis Hillier.

The collection that has given me the pleasantest surprise is *ffolkes' ffauna* (Harrap £1.50). I did not realise I liked either ffolkes himself, with his washy, watery, wandering line, or jokes starring beasts of the field. But now (one pig to another: 'It's fibrositis. Would you mind rubbing my streaky?') I know better.

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Donald G. MacRae

When the Going Was Good

William Beveridge: A Biography by JOSE HARRIS *Oxford* £9.50
Harold Laski by GRANVILLE EASTWOOD *Mowbrays* £7.50

A kind of good grey magic extended over Britain – despite the war and the bombing, rationing and the abominable winter of 1947 – throughout the 1940s. The grey dissipated in the dawn of that decade of continued economic growth, the 1950s. True, there was still war and fiasco, Korea and Suez, but the age of welfare and of the Eisenhower baroque was, in the perspective of what is now history, one of the happier times that humanity (and not just British humanity) has known. In a way these two decades, with their sober hopes, their triumphs – as they saw them – of the right, the just, the drab, modest and good, when all problems seemed limited, decently manageable and technical, are the age not just of Churchill, Attlee and Macmillan, but of Beveridge, Keynes and Laski. Yet the world is full of unforeseen and unintended consequences: today we are paying some of the prices of all three. It is arguable that these costs are not, however, too high.

Here we have the lives of Laski and Beveridge, both in their ways good and pleasant books. Granville Eastwood's *Harold Laski* is not the work of a professional scholar but of a retired trade union official. It is based on a good deal of research, composed topically rather than to a strict chronology, and despite a few slips it handsomely replaces the slipshod memoir of Laski written, alas, by the NS's former editor, Kingsley Martin. It is a better likeness of Laski as I knew him than a more formal and official life would ever be. José Harris's *William Beveridge* is a work of academic scholarship and completely replaces Beveridge's own rather sad autobiography, *Power and Influence*. It is a successful book even though I faltered a little during the run of learned administrative chapters which go from Edwardian employment problems to Beveridge's role in rationing during the first world war. Indeed, so good is the book I would have wished it longer and fuller on Beveridge's last years – can it be as recently as the early Sixties that Beveridge startled me on Oxford station, looking incredibly old and lost and then precisely recognising me, whom he had met I suppose four times (and insulted once)?

These books confirm my recollection. I recall Laski in a phrase I once heard him use of Charles James Fox as 'the memory of a great loveableness'. He was quite simply a good and kind man, and he was good and kind even if you were, like me, 30 years his junior and in profound disagreement with him. He was also ridiculously vain, less of a romancer than he is now made out to be, but certainly one who loved even the coat-tails of fame and power, and very widely but rather imprecisely learned. For some he was a great teacher, bringing out what was unique in them; for others he was a bad teacher, giving the illusion rather than the reality of learning. I think there were two variables in this: the capacity of the student and the state of Laski's over-driven energies. He could, indeed on occasion *had* to, rest his frail body and busy mind in rhetoric and automatic delivery.

Beveridge comes through José Harris's pages as a man obscurely wounded and opaque. This is not the writer's fault (so far as I can judge), but the truth about her subject. The nature of his wound is not clear: his ever-recurrent resentment that each great success in a career full of great success was yet less than his ambition was a symptom of his injury rather than its cause. So, I think, was his long relationship with the woman he eventually married, his cousin by marriage, the dread Jessy Mair, to whom he was devoted and who was, in his public relations, so frequently difficult or even disastrous. Nor would I ascribe it to his early Anglo-Saxon upbringing or the rather endearing oddities of his family. Rather I think it was something inherent in the man: the disjunction between his rapid, comprehensive and yet narrow intelligence, his fury for work and his almost complete lack of aesthetic feeling, philosophical curiosity or historical culture. (He had read Greats at Balliol: as so often, instead of opening his sensibility, the experience shut him in.) His opacity, as this text abundantly demonstrates, made him perpetually and curiously bad at politics and politicians.

Both Beveridge and Laski were very public men. Their public lives reflected what they knew and what they believed. In Beveridge's case Mrs Harris gives the evidence but Mr Eastwood, though he tries valiantly, is less successful with Laski. Beveridge undoubtedly knew many facts about society, and his most constant concern and consolation throughout his life was building the great sandhill of his history of prices. His ideas were an odd mixture of crude positivism, a school-mistress statism, eugenics and an incapacity for any settled understanding of economic theory and policy. He believed in something he called 'sociology', but, as with the Webbs, this was merely a kind of primitive inductionism. His science was Baconian: facts would reveal truth, create theory. It never occurred to him that without theory there are in social science no facts. In consequence he regularly lost his temper, not least with those social scientists who were his colleagues at the LSE, not least with Laski.

In Mrs Harris's evidence Beveridge at one time or another – this is the penalty of the crudest positivism – believed almost everything and anything. He was an advocate of a corporate society run by expert

More Christmas suggestions

The Popular War Histories, published nearly 30 years ago and long since out of print, have been re-issued in paperback. Well-known authors give first-hand accounts of selected highlights of the greatest military conflict in recorded history. The titles are *Arms and the Men* (about the land war as a whole), *Five Ventures* (dealing with Iraq, Syria, Persia, Madagascar, and the Dodecanese), *the Campaign in Italy, North West Europe 1944-5, Greece and Crete 1941,* and *Norway – The Commandos – Dieppe.* All contain photographs and campaign maps. *The Campaign in Italy* costs £3, the others £2 each.

Exploring is a new series of illustrated booklets linked to a Science Museum exhibition about the latest ways in which Man is pushing back the frontiers of knowledge. The titles explain themselves: *Man on the Moon, The Solar System, Remote Sensing, Mind and Body, Our Changing Climate, Under the Sea.* All except *Mind and Body* have a centre section of colour plates. *Remote Sensing* costs 95p, the others 75p each.

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administrators, a liberal democrat, an extreme *laissez faire* economist, an arch economic interventionist, a proponent of welfare who thought many of his fellow men thoroughly inferior: it was only from the 1940s, when the two 'Beveridge reports' on social insurance and full employment had been published, that he took on the appearance of the benign Merlin presiding over the white magic of the post-war years. As Mrs Harris shows, the role was not one with which he was at ease. But he was never at ease whether as administrator, Director of LSE, Master of University College, Oxford, accredited sage and magus, or failed and frustrated politician. Perhaps unease was what made him so constant, so prodigal a worker.

Did he work as hard as Laski? The library shelves are only part witness, in their long row of books, to Laski's output. No one has collected (or ever will) all his journalism in the *New Republic*, the *Daily Herald*, *Forward*, *Left News*, the NEW STATESMAN and so on and on. His lecture talks, speeches, visits to WEA branches, summer schools, constituency Labour parties are unrecorded. So largely is his mastery of that ephemeral art, university teaching. Alas, the result now seems very small, very distant: it is Mr Eastwood's merit partly to correct that impression by recovering so much of the man. The public reputation of Laski in his own day is, however, irrecoverable; the impression that he was the intellectual peer of Einstein or of Russell is now a problem of intellectual history. So too is his success as a propagandist, as not least of the voices that made the Labour victory of 1945 possible.

Yet as an analyst of politics Laski got things wrong. He was charmed by antiquarian problems in the history of political thought. He turned from his concern with political pluralism to a statism in which he felt lay the only possible response to the urgencies of his time at home and abroad. He fudged about the USSR because he wished to have no enemies on the Left, because he became more and more a marxist, and because he was always, even as a very young man, drawn by the enchantment of power. Unlike Beveridge, Laski was always clear about where his political emotions lay. They reflected at large his impulsive and enormous private generosity of spirit, but that generosity was insufficient guide to the labyrinths of real political arrangements and perils. Had he not driven himself so hard he might have done something more permanent.

Nothing was more inevitable than that Beveridge and Laski should disagree. Nothing was more typical of Beveridge than that, while permitting himself the most complete freedom to intervene in practical affairs, he should fear it in other academics. Nothing was more typical of Laski than that, when the issues were actual and personal, he should have stood unequivocally for the freedom of speech and of dissent – even from Harold Laski. These books add much to our understanding of our recent domestic history, of how we got here. Yet the transactions they recount seem very remote. We have lost a great deal of innocence since such careers, such influences, were possible in the good, grey 1940s.

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A unique book — the lost chapter from one of the world's greatest classics, only recently come to light. With seven pages of facsimiles and a 'reconstruction' after Tenniel by Ken Leeder, this should be on every bookshelf that carries a copy of *Through the Looking Glass*. £1.95

MACMILLAN LONDON

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Mark Kidel

Tommyrot

Elton: It's A Little Bit Funny by ELTON JOHN, BERNIE TAUPIN and DAVID NUTTER *Penguin* £2.50

The Story of Tommy by RICHARD BARNES and PETE TOWNSHEND *Eel Pie Publishing* £3.95

A Decade of the Who by STEVE TURNER *Elm Tree Books* £4.50

1988 The New Wave Punk Rock Explosion by CAROLINE COON *Orbach & Chambers* £1.95

Rock books, unlike first novels, are a booming business. A wide cross-section of publishers, large and small, have recognised a growing market for titles concerned with the heart of contemporary youth culture: if all those fans buy albums by the million – at nearly £4 a time these days – they are also likely to buy a few books, so long as they are synched up to the particular chart successes of the moment. Quickie biographies, churned out within weeks of an artist's leap into the number-one spot, now join the other bestsellers on the station bookstalls.

So do the large paperback books – attractively produced, tactile, and designed to be far more compelling than 200 pages of small print – which have flooded into the shops during the last few years. *Elton: It's A Little Bit Funny* is typical of this new line, and just from the general production point of view one of the best of the rash of publications put out this year. Court photographer David Nutter's photographs of the spruce and balding superstar are supposed to record the reality of backstage life during a year-long world tour in 1976. There is no doubt about his skill as a photographic reporter, or the degree to which he became involved with a subject he has documented with almost obsequious affection. The book, written in an irritatingly chatty style by Elton John's lyricist Bernie Taupin, sets out to uncover the truth behind the image, but the pictures – all superb style and very little content – only scrape the surface: all the characters in them are so obviously acting out the familiar rockbiz quadrille, a game derived from the culture and mythology that has grown up over the last 25 years.

The book depicts a world of naughty rebellious boys, playing about in dressing rooms, luxurious hotels and swimming pools: it perpetuates the rock'n'roll dream that still gives hope to so many unemployed school-leavers and bored factory or office hands, never giving us more than a glimpse of the seamier side of Elton's glittering life, the acute loneliness and uneasy homosexuality he has talked about at length in an interview for *Rolling Stone* published last year. The book is redeemed by some excellent shots of Elton John's stage act, always a lively and very photogenic performance. Perhaps the most telling photo of all, however, shows Elton, with his cherub-faced manager John Reid, sitting at a desk in Philadelphia with Mayor Rizzo – the law-and-order gangster renowned for leading the bloodiest baton charges in the ghetto. The manager stands at the star's left, while Rizzo beams at his right, his hand resting proprietorially on the back of Elton's chair.

Pete Townshend, the star of *The Story of Tommy* and *A Decade of the Who*, has entirely different leanings, his best work clearly influenced by powerful spiritual experiences. The former book intercuts the lyrics from the original rock opera with a series of articles and interviews describing the genesis of *Tommy* and the making of Ken Russell's epic film. The design, inspired perhaps by Russell's powerful vulgarity, is very 'lively', light-years away from cool colour-supplement graphic chic, and at times reminiscent of a magazine like *Honey*.

Townshend, the most articulate of the first generation of superstars, has written a very clear and fascinating account of the opera's roots in his experiences with LSD and the teachings of Meher Baba, the gently smiling Indian guru who followed a vow of silence from 1925 to his death in 1969. The majority of the book, however, is devoted to a blow-by-blow account of the making of the film, with a large number of interesting technical details, from the design and construction of the frightening iron maiden for the 'Acid Queen' sequence to the search for Ann-Margret's gold rings through over 4,000lbs of baked beans.

A Decade of the Who, a considerably less literate book, is largely taken up by the Who's music and lyrics, and heavy-handedly illustrated with a series of bizarre and second-rate surrealist paintings. The early photographs of the band, dressed up in mod regalia, an enlightening chapter on Meher Baba and the section on the band's forgotten mentor and first manager, Pete Meaden, have a certain historical value, but they fail to raise the book above the level of a utilitarian collection of songsheets.

It was obviously finished too early to include Pete Townshend's interesting reaction to the phenomenon of punk, a subject he briefly mentions in his introduction to the *Tommy* volume, when acknowledging with endearing honesty that the opera's gigantic success, 'while liberating the band financially, had also smashed them down': they were no longer able to speak for the street. Many of the punks have denounced the Who as flabby middle-aged have-beens, no longer in touch with the essential rebelliousness of youth. In *1988 The New Wave Punk Explosion* Caroline Coon, a devoted and early chronicler of rock's latest bunch of angry young men (and women), describes the background to a movement that has shaken the music industry, and brought a much-needed blast of fresh air into the rock scene. Written in a typically *Melody Maker* style – Ms Coon fortunately resists the *New Musical Express*'s pale excursions into the 'new' journalism – the book devotes plenty of space to the punks' own views, sparing us an excess of pseudo-sociological analysis.

Being a fan's account, though, it lacks edge, and ignores one of the major ambiguities inherent in the 'punk explosion' – the blatant conflict between the nature of the recording industry and the gradually less raucous cries of the increasingly successful 'rebels'. The punks – and it is not surprising that such an exploitative book omits the fact – are prisoners of the ugly world they so angrily criticise. The fury of their ranting songs only reflects the horror of the modern urban scene; it offers no alternative.

Claire Tomalin

Red-Blooded

Rebecca West: A Celebration *Macmillan* £8.50

In the epilogue to Rebecca West's *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon* she describes how a Viennese university student came to question her about her work, hoping to make it the subject of a thesis. The girl was young, pretty and golden-haired, the favourite pupil of a friend; what she got from the interview cannot have been at all what she had bargained for. Miss West first tried to dissuade her from attempting to build a thesis out of her scattered and various writings, and then went on to deliver a spirited, learned and hectoring lecture on English and French literature. The hostess was, by her own account, formidable, and her guest trembled and sulked. At last Miss West elicited the fact that this fair-haired Viennese was in fact of Slav parentage. 'Are you not at all proud of having Slav blood in you?' 'Why should I be? What is there to be proud about in being Slav?' the poor victim asked blankly, quite lost by now.

The little scene, funny and rather frightening too, lives before our eyes as so many confrontations between women do in Dame Rebecca's work, scenes in which one reveals her poverty of spirit before the generous and cultivated indignation of the other. In the context of *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon* it has a particular message, of course, since by mingling travelogue with history that book sets out precisely to give the reason for Slav pride; and it was published in 1941. As Samuel Hynes says in his introduction to this celebratory volume of Dame Rebecca's writings, it was written at the height of her powers; and it is impossible to read the section in which she mourns the state of Europe at the end of the Thirties, likening it to a landscape slowly obliterated by murderous snow, without feeling a retrospective tremor of panic.

In reporting of this kind she excels. She is on record as saying she would have preferred to write nothing but fiction and poetry but was forced into journalism by the need to earn a living. This harsh necessity was to our advantage. 'I ran about the world watching it cast its old skin and put on the new,' she said, and her accounts of Eastern Europe, of the Nuremberg trials, of the trial of William Joyce, of the case of Mr Setty and Mr Hume (one dropped

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the other in parcels over the marshes of the East Coast) are classics of the reporter's art. For she is never dry or knowing or effusive; she grows absorbed in her subject and story as a plant takes water. She is moved, amazed, indignant, caught off guard, changing her mind, not knowing something she needs to know; yet always with a firm centre. It would be as well to enlist her sympathy, one feels, but even to her villains she may on occasion be magnanimous.

Reporting a writer, too, she hits the nerve precisely. Her account of a walk and conversation in Italy with D. H. Lawrence, written at the time of his death, gives us his physical presence in a phrase:

> because of the flimsiness of his build it seemed as if a groove ran down the centre of his chest and his spine, so that his shoulder blades stood out in a pair of almost winglike projections.

We see Lawrence and Norman Douglas watching some peasant boys about to plunge into a river, both almost hissing at the thought of the cold shock of the water on those unknown bodies. Like most who knew Lawrence, she felt there was more life in him than in other people; and she praises him for 'doing justice to the seriousness' of that life.

She likes the serious in art – Lawrence, James, Joyce, Kafka – and she was serious herself. But although her fiction is often arresting, its concerns do not always fit without awkwardness in the characters to whom they are given. *Parthenope*, the tale of a family of madwomen, contains the good remark that being a character in a tragedy can make you also, with extra painfulness, a character in a farce; but somehow the six pale-eyed sisters in their Marie Laurencin dresses and their sober guardian with her schemes and secrets float just beyond the reach of imagination. *The Soldier's Return*, the story of a shell-shocked man torn between a working woman, the true love of his youth, and his refined wife, misses by being too schematic and laced with special dislike of the wife. There is a sense of undigested indignation at work here. Gordon Ray has said that *The Soldier's Return* is meant to represent Wells's feelings for his wives, and it certainly fits his account of the two women in his *Autobiography*. If so, it was a strange venture for his mistress; but simply as a piece of period writing it is worth reviving, with its psychoanalytic magic, Wells as an officer, Lawrence the biggest influence on the style.

Glad as one is to have these reminders, a large volume of reprinted material cut into ungainly segments is not the ideal form of celebration for Dame Rebecca. It would be handier to have reprints of individual works in their entirety. Still, there is cause for celebration. Dame Rebecca, like Edmund Wilson, has played a heroic part in the world of letters, never ceasing to work, to read, to use her travelling intelligence and to think difficult questions right through instead of stopping at convenient crossroads. She is a moralist; her writing is red-blooded; even when she declares, as she does, that 'man is a hating rather than a loving animal,' she does it out of a large and generous sense of what life should be.

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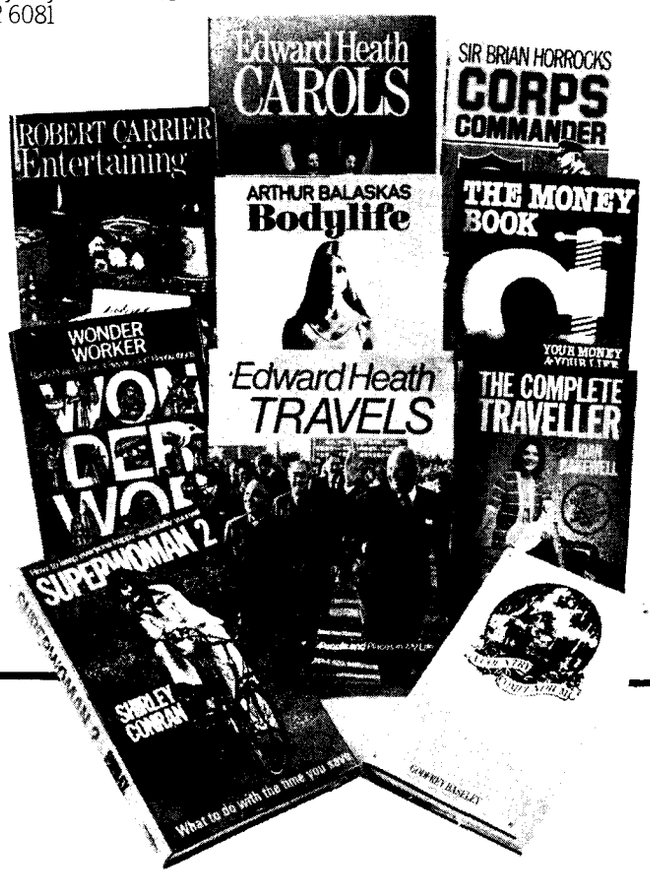

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Christopher Hitchens

Just a Whisper

The Gun and the Olive Branch: The Roots of Violence in the Middle East by DAVID HIRST *Faber* £6.50
The Israeli Secret Service by RICHARD DEACON *Hamish Hamilton* £6.95
Israel: Utopia Incorporated by URI DAVIS *Zed Press* £5

Why is the Israel-Palestine dispute so bloody, and why is it in every classic way a tragedy? Chiefly because both sides have a historic claim to the Holy Land, and, apparently, neither claim can be vindicated without involving the moral equivalent of genocide. Destroying the nation, that is to say, *without necessarily destroying the* people. Or not all of them. To most Europeans, the Jews seem to have suffered enough (and we should know). To any Arab, it is anathema that his land and people should be sacrificed to Israel in order to appease Europe's guilty conscience. These are the basic ingredients of a conflict which ramifies everywhere and scorns the neutral.

David Hirst is the excellent Middle East correspondent of the *Guardian*. His title takes itself from Yasser Arafat's veiled threat delivered before the United Nations. But his subtitle is, as it were, the root of the matter. Recently I heard a prominent pro-Zionist NS contributor announce that while he would always defend Israel from its barbarous neighbours, he often doubted whether the foundation of the state had after all been a good thing. This is the territory covered by Hirst. He shows how utterly ruthless and cynical the early Zionists were about the annexation of Palestine, how no alliance was too opportunist for them, and how finally the scarcely credible circumstances of the Nazi holocaust won over the majority of Jews and also secured the new state international acceptance.

From everybody but the Arabs, that is. As Hirst points out, so far as they are concerned the Jews should go the same way as the Crusaders did, and rightly so. He makes no attempt to conceal his sympathies, and the book is almost entirely polemical in tone. But his references and notes are impressive, and he uses Israeli sources wherever possible. It is difficult these days to recall how very recently Golda Meir proclaimed that 'the Palestinians do not exist'. Hirst makes no bones about how they overcame that propaganda – by forcing themselves on the world's attention in ways too notorious to be repeated here. That is why his account of early Zionist terror is important. It provides one part of the legitimation of Palestinian violence.

It was in January 1964 that *Our Palestine* prophesied, from seedy and obscure premises in Beirut, that

> our voice, the voice of the Palestinian people, will not be heard until the sons of Palestine stand together in one rank, the rank of 'life or death', solid and compact. Then you will find the world attentive to your merest whisper . . . yes, just a whisper.

From then until now 'the Children of the Catastrophe' have advanced to the point where they and their allies can seriously challenge Israel's existence as a state. Whether you read the story with horror or exhilaration, it makes an epic tale, and David Hirst has told it relentlessly well. However, in his concern to depict Israel's aggressive and chauvinist stance, he often shows a lack of imaginative sympathy. Suppose, for instance, that an Israeli were to admit all that Hirst levels against the foundation of his state, and reply, 'But that was before I was born, and we live here now. After all, we don't ask for much room.' Or again, Hirst does not really go into the frightful hecatomb that was the Lebanon, where the PLO found it hard to coexist even with fellow-Arabs. This was a crushing *political* defeat, as well as an appalling military and civil one.

Some quibbles, too. He describes the operations of the Third International at a date almost ten years before its foundation. But if you want to read a serious account of the price of Zionism, and a sobering review of Israel's new role as conqueror and occupier (especially in the city of Jerusalem), then Hirst is your man. It would be otiose to say that he doesn't point the way to a solution. Who does?

Donald McCormick used to be a famous foreign correspondent, and foreign manager of the *Sunday Times*. Under the name Richard Deacon he has indulged his taste for yarns and adventures with the astonishing story of how Israel equipped itself with one of the most fearsomely efficient secret services of modern times. 'And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan.' It's all here – the Eichmann kidnapping, the counterstrokes against Nasser's ex-Nazi 'advisors', the Six Day War. As befits a former intelligence colleague of Ian Fleming, Deacon has a great admiration for Israeli flair and *brio*, but his book is enthralling enough whether you happen to like that kind of thing or not.

Uri Davis is that rare creature, a thoroughgoing anti-Zionist Israeli. *Utopia Incorporated* is not so much about the Middle East conflict as it is a portrait of the interlocking interest groups that make up the Israeli elite. Davis charges that this layer is self-sustaining, corrupt, and discriminatory both against Arabs and oriental Jews. He makes his case strongly, with copious notes, diagrams and a mean way with quotations. It's written in a kind of New-Left prose, and it comes very obviously from a man thoroughly embattled on the inside. Here is a part of his conclusion:

> One hopes that the process of the eclipse of Zionism and Israel will be one of gradual stagnation, corruption and demoralisation; one fears the nightmare of a murderous, bloody defeat and counter-occupation.

Yes indeed. What other state or people can produce intellectuals who write about the future in such terms? The Middle East is a hell of a place to be a socialist; credit to Uri Davis for registering the difficulty so well.

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Jonathan Keates

The Greatest

The Other Half by KENNETH CLARK *Murray* £6.50

When Kenneth Clark visited Boston soon after the American screening of *Civilisation*, porters at the airport jostled for the favour of carrying his luggage and refused tips. In a chemist's shop he overheard a lady say to a man behind the counter: 'Do you realise you have the greatest man in the world in your shop?' 'Sure I do,' he replied. The Senate bought its own copy of the programmes, and at the Washington National Gallery Clark, after walking the entire length of the building through a hysterical crowd, was placed on a platform and made to follow *The Star-Spangled Banner* with an address which, since the amplifiers had broken down, was inaudible.

His consequent surprise and embarrassment are all the more paradoxical in an English context, though in this country he drew fire from critics who scorned him as a populariser in an age which allows art to be admonitory or disturbing but not accessible. *Civilisation* had, indeed, its egregious and ineffable moments: the shot of Clark's avian features, for example, looming from a cornfield while a tiny Chartres Cathedral pricked the horizon, and that closing image which showed him giving an avuncular pat to a Henry Moore and seemed to imply that the unnamed hero of programme 13 was the Castellan of Saltwood himself.

Saucing his memoirs with a bizarre mixture of waspishness, modesty, condescension, enthusiasm and priggishness, he now takes us through the more exposed portions of a life which, in its institutional worthiness, strongly recalls Prince Albert's. As wartime Director of the National Gallery he providently shuffles the collection, including the unwieldy *Charles I on Horseback*, into a disused slate quarry near Blaenau Ffestiniog. In the Ministry of Information canteen he introduces ('my most lasting achievement') John Betjeman to Joan Hunter Dunn. On the Arts Council he sells the idea of Covent Garden as a national opera to the Treasury. As Slade Professor he throws off the elegant *Landscape into Art, The Nude* and *Piero della Francesca*. He has fun, as ITA chairman, sporting Prince Littler, Val Parnell and Lew Grade before snobbish ATV moguls.

The Other Half is subtitled 'a self-portrait' and much of it is given over to personal reflections couched in that familiar lantern-lecture style of short, crisp sentences. *Pace* Clark's advocacy of it, this relaxed manner yields ambiguous results. Its simplicity often seems arch or deluding, and the Clarkian self depicted is not always attractive. He insists that he is not a scholar, and his humility, touching at times, degenerates into obsequiousness when he speaks of 'Mr Berenson', 'Mr Shaw' and 'Mr Maugham', towards all of whom he is characteristically fair and unsparing. Smugness and a certain condescension towards those not as culturally marinated as himself colour such moments as his lunch with De Gaulle, by whom he is 'immensely impressed': 'Later his courage in the Algerian crisis and his books, in an admirable French style, seemed to prove that I was right.' The dignified account of his wife's death at the book's close is marred by gaffes like 'to our great relief war broke out between Israel and Egypt, so we were deflected to Anatolia'.

Such complacent silliness only sharpens the pleasure of a book already made enjoyable by Clark's inimitable sense of place and by his tenderly amused sketches of friends. Edith Sitwell directs impecunious Indian poets to beg from 'a Dr Leavis at Cambridge', Myra Hess plays 'inexorably' to Sir Stafford Cripps amid 'a heterogeneous collection of chintzes', the hag-ridden Vivien Leigh quells a hideous child with a voice she has perfected for Antigone. The coddled Edwardian of *Another Part of the Wood* becomes the over-exposed national mandarin, butt and envy of academics and reviewers. Without rancour or vanity, continuously alert to the ridiculous or the beautiful, *The Other Half* reflects typical qualities of leisured, widely-diffused absorption and enthusiasm, and defies us to dislike or despise its author.

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Anthony Howard

Two Pillars

The Bedside Guardian 26 edited by W. L. Webb *Collins* £4
The Telegraph Year edited by David Holloway *Hodder & Stoughton* £4.95

The *Guardian* and the *Telegraph* hardly seem at first sight compatible companions. All the stranger, therefore, how similar these two volumes turn out to be. Of course, in each case the contributions have been selected by the respective literary editors – and that may well have done something to blur any ideological cutting-edge; but I would still swear that at least half the pieces in the one could appear without embarrassment in the other.

No doubt the *Guardian* will be more hurt by that reflection than the *Telegraph*. It is not just that it has been at it longer – this, after all, represents its 26th year of 'bedside' endeavour whereas it is the *Telegraph*'s first effort in the same field; more than that, however, the *Guardian* has always prided itself in the distinctive, almost idiosyncratic, style of its writers. Maybe that once was true (the first *Bedside* I have on my shelves is the one in which Bernard Levin made his début as the *Guardian*'s TV critic – and what a breakthrough that was), but today the *Guardian*'s claim to be pre-eminently a writer's paper is much harder to maintain. Norman Shrapnel, James Cameron and – a welcome recent recruit – Polly Toynbee may still hold up the old personalised flag; but there is no longer an Alistair Cooke, no more a Nesta Roberts, no replacement these many years for Michael Frayn.

Equally eroded by time has been the *Guardian*'s claim to speak for non-conformity. Nowadays when I read one of Frances Cairncross's increasingly hard-line economic leaders, I frequently dream I am reading an article in the *Telegraph* (and suspect one day that I may even wake up to find that I am). What, though, *is* left is the *Guardian*'s probably less useful reputation of being more a magazine than a newspaper; and that reputation this year's *Bedside* certainly underpins and supports. Not a word about Mr Thorpe or the Lib-Lab pact, nothing about the monarchy as an institution even in Jubilee Year, lots about 'San Serriffe' but not a single mention of South Africa. There is, of course, a difficulty here: the exigencies of printing and binding demand that all such volumes go to press about halfway through the year. But that difficulty is hardly helped by *The Bedside Guardian's* comparatively new habit of putting a date beneath each of the contributions included.

The Telegraph Year, wisely, does not do that (though it includes dates, without benefit of the year concerned, in its index). Even so, the book's title is something of a misnomer, and not just because nothing from the *Sunday Telegraph* is included at all. Take, for example, the book's opening piece: it is an astonishingly charitable appreciation of Harold Wilson upon his resignation as PM – an event, if memory serves, that took place more like two years ago than one. That particular article, too, could be said to represent the old-style *Telegraph*, in which reverence for high office was nearly always allowed in the end to overcome any reservations about a fellow's views. For the past three or four years, however, a much less deferential approach has been apparent in the *Telegraph*'s pages – and it is admirably represented here by Colin Welch, Frank Johnson, John O'Sullivan and Russell Lewis. But that is not the only recent change to have come over the formerly sober-sided *Telegraph*. It has also gone in for a much fresher – and less wire-service dominated – style of news reporting: excellent examples in this book come from Ann Morrow on Princess Margaret, Godfrey Barket on Arabs in London, and from Guy Rais.

Both suitable books for Christmas, then? Yes, indeed – especially if you happen to have an SWP nephew. He should have a very happy time reinforcing his conviction that there is no 'pluralism' in the British press, that it is just one big capitalist monolith. Really no differences at all? Well, perhaps a symbolic one. *The Telegraph Year* – smart blue jacket, handsome type – is immaculately turned out; *The Bedside Guardian*, as always, looks and feels scruffy. Perhaps from now on we shall have to settle for such small mercies.

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Lorna Sage

Bent Double

The Passionate Shepherdess: Aphra Behn, 1640-89 by MAUREEN DUFFY *Cape* £7.50

It used to be the fashion to regret that Mary Wollstonecraft, England's first straightforward feminist, was a woman of scandalous character – hot rationality and selfish passions. It is still the fashion, as Maureen Duffy points out, to hesitate coyly over Aphra Behn, the first professional authoress to flourish on Grub Street, because of her toughness, her erotic expertise, and her appropriation of all the rakish Restoration dialects. As if women who stepped out of the conventional roles so abruptly could – and should – have been at the same time serene, balanced, 'normal' and tidy. In the case of Aphra Behn the very scantiness of biographical evidence has helped the reductive innuendoes along, so that she has dwindled to a scholarly snigger, complimented in passing for her 'salacious verve'. The suggestion seems to be that she picked up literature (like the pox, one nasty contemporary claimed) from her men, and so somehow doesn't 'count'.

Maureen Duffy has unearthed a good deal of new information, most of which goes to show that previous biographers have been too easily sidetracked by their suspicions about contemporary sources (and perhaps their covert willingness to take Aphra Behn as a fiction). Thus it seems that she *was* born Aphra Johnson, as wa claimed in a 1698 memoir by 'One of the Fair Sex'. If so, her family were fairly humble hangers-on of the Kent Culpeppers who in turn were related to the Sidneys which gives Aphra (born in 1640) a chance of having acquired early literary ambitions There is no further trace of the first 2(years of her life; however, she makes up for that by reappearing in 1663 in th Caribbean colony of Surinam (the settin for her first-person narrative in *Oroonok* in 1688). This episode, which has alway cast doubts on her credibility, acquires a lot more prosaic substance in Ms Duffy' version: one no longer has to take Aphra' own word for it; there is evidence fron other uneasy settlers that she was ther for a few months in 1663-64 (her fathe she said, died on the voyage out, hence th family's rapid return). If the mock-epi colony politics of Surinam resemble noth ing so much as John Barth's *The Sot-Wee Factor*, that, it now seems, is not her doing

When she left she was, according t gossip, pursued by one William Scot; an her next spectacular appearance on wha they call the stage of history – which is particularly apt description of Stuart pol tics – is in Antwerp (1666) where she's government spy negotiating with Scot ove his belated conversion to the royal cause This time State papers vouch for the im probable reality, as they do for her retur in 1667 and her brief imprisonment fo debt (she was dunning the king). In shor

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the one remaining unsupported fact in the extraordinary story of her early life is Mr Behn, who remains as much of a mystery as ever: 'It seems certain, then, that he was dead by August 1666 at the latest,' says Ms Duffy, with some relief, since it's impossible to show he was ever alive. Aphra's own contacts, traceable from the mid-1660s on, sufficiently explain her honoured, much flattered, much abused, place in the London literary scene.

From 1670, when *The Forc'd Marriage* was produced by the Duke's Company at the Playhouse, until her death in 1689, she was a prolific and thoroughly professional writer. So professional – turning her hand not only to plays but novellas, songs, elegies, panegyrics and paraphrases from the French – that it has proved sometimes difficult to identify and assess her particular sensibility. Politically and aesthetically she was a high Tory; she admired and variously emulated Waller, Dryden, Rochester, Buckingham; though not a Catholic, she remained loyal to the Duke of York, even after he became James II (her last poem wryly acknowledges the Glorious Revolution – 'Yet I the great design adore/Tho ruin'd in the universal turn'). She complimented Nell Gwynn and was close to Elizabeth Barry, and some of the odium of the actress rubbed off on her, though the only lover she's known to have had is John Hoyle, an ungrateful bisexual lawyer (he was tried for buggery in 1687) who lived to write her epitaph. She may have had a greedy eye for young poets, as one of them later alleged; in her forties she seems to have cultivated female disciples. She was buried, to the scandal of succeeding generations, in Westminster Abbey.

Was her eclipse, then, unjustified – a matter of prejudice and chance? In part, yes: despite the fact that she turned far too efficiently into the all-purpose Restoration wit, there are qualities in her writing that redeem the age's commonplaces. Her practical experience of intrigue shows in her plotting, even when she's writing sexual comedy. On sex itself she's intelligent and shocking – her women size up men in parody-masculine fashion, and she sympathises deeply with rakes baffled by conventional female modesty. The shocks are deliberately administered:

> I don't intend every he that likes me shall have me, but he that I like. I shou'd have staid in the Nunnery still, if I had lik'd my Lady Abbess as well as she lik'd me.

So says Hellena, 'a gay young woman' in *The Rover*. Her equivocation about her sexual bent gave her a double insight into women – 'The Muses to our sex perverse and coy/Astraea does familiarly enjoy,' as one sly male admirer put it.

This biography makes her a more solid, more plausible presence in literary history, and so should win her new readers. It's not always easy reading. Ms Duffy gets tangled up in the network of Aphra's legions of acquaintances – she could have done with more emphasis and selectivity. She isn't quite certain either of her attitude to the reputation, and ends up defending Aphra's right to as many green graduates as she fancied, yet denying that she did. And there isn't enough quotation from the work. What should happen next is a fresh critical look at Aphra Behn, perhaps the production of a play or two, and she'll be (what she always was) a new woman.

Valentine Cunningham

Thrown In

Francis Warner, Poet and Dramatist edited by Tim Prentki *Sceptre Press* £3.75

Francis Warner, a Fellow of St Peter's College, Oxford, last televised trooping up his staircase with Yevtushenko, in his own words 'an English pastoral poet catapulted into the jet set', is 40. Most famous for befriending the famous, he apparently knows everybody worth knowing: Beckett, Henry Moore, Buckminster Fuller, Kathleen Raine, Richard Burton, Elizabeth Taylor – you name them. So a *Festschrift*, even a 40th-birthday *Festschrift*, should be quite something. Alas, disappointment awaits. Only one famous name has bothered to contribute, and he's a lexicographer. Otherwise, we're left with an actress, a refugee professor from Beirut, a gerontic ex-theatre critic,

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a landscape gardener, a feeble girl or two, and a gang of St Peter's criticules. To be sure, a horse by Elizabeth Frink and a head of Francis Warner with linked bones by Sorel Etrog are reproduced; but still, not a cry, not a breath from Sam Beckett.

Base ingratitude? After all, the plays for the Edinburgh fringe that Mr Warner not only writes but also produces and invests good money in ('he rents a house which we all share . . . accommodation is "thrown in". With husbands, wives, children and pets accommodated too!') have tended to be done under the banner of 'The Samuel Beckett Theatre Appeal Company'. Or is it, rather, good sense on the part of Beckett and the rest: a surer grasp of *mesure* than is possessed by the lexicographical colleague and the aged theatre critic or the youthful sidekicks and recent pupils over-eager to get themselves into print? I mean, Francis Warner is only 40, and if he is a decent enough poet, he's also only a minor Georgian versifier with a taste for metrical experiments. His name as a poet – on the evidence of production so far – may well not live after him. What's more, his name as a dramatist will certainly not survive, unless he revises his second-hand line in post-Beckett, sub-Genet sordidity. As a scholar – and here we learn of his research interests in neo-Platonism – he hasn't much fruited yet. And, generally, your chums and fans wait for lots more proof before clubbing together to call you a genius ('Francis Warner has a better right to the title than many'). Eliot was 59 before he got a volume of homage; Beckett was 61; Joyce was only 47 when *Our Exagmination* appeared, but already the author of *A Portrait* and *Ulysses*; Charles Williams died before he got his; Helen Gardner may shortly get hers, but is still waiting. And so on.

Prentki's volume, though, is not just celebration, it's publicity – aimed at reaping 'new audiences of his plays and new readers of his poetry'. And publicity can't wait. Obviously, anyway, at 61 the promise, such as it is, of 40 may have proved a bummer and there would be no *Festschrift*. At 61, however, an author would most likely get better critics. There'd be less simple adulation, less *Isis* idol chat about velvet jackets and Wildean retorts, less indeed of the lexicographer's stunningly simpleminded belief that coining, or recurrence of quotation in the OED Supplements, maketh poet. Above all, later on someone might feel freer to declare the extreme nastiness of the plays. The poet Warner is a frequently unguarded, even child-like yearner. His plays by contrast, are the direst brothel fantasy, a lash-up of tits and leather and chamber-pots, reducing people to vile bodily parts, unpleasant diseases or repellent animals and fish, viciously hacking with sharp instruments at their people's private parts, especially the women's. Simply, these plays hate women. One actress, about to be razored in the crutch while hanging upside down, wisely kept her legs together instead of spreading them wide, as instructed, 'like a starfish': 'later Mr Warner insisted that his text should be followed to the letter.'

That the brothel is tricked out with Christian tags, bits of Church music and neo-Platonic hermeticisms – naughty-but-clever-schoolboy, unholy-'Saint-Genet'-fashion – only multiplies its repellence. The boys from St Peter's can't see it, of course: they're too busy explicating the ways of Wasse fish and their master's debt to Edgar Wind. A more decently human sense of revulsion may come their way in time. Perhaps even by the time their tutor reaches 61. Meanwhile, one can only feel it would have been more decorous all round to have waited.

Derek Mahon

Laughing Gas

The Confessions of Proinsias O'Toole by JOHN MORROW *Blackstaff* £4.75
Best Irish Short Stories 2 edited by DAVID MARCUS *Elek* £4.95
Alien Embassy by IAN WATSON *Gollancz* £4.20

Blackstaff is a Belfast firm and *The Confessions of Proinsias O'Toole* a Belfast novel. Working on the principle that 'comedy is often a more profound response to suffering than breast-beating,' John Morrow, a noted regional humorist, sets out to reduce, or perhaps promote, the bloody rubbish of Belfast to a state of sublime absurdity, beginning with the satirical and unlikely name of the narrator. There are only 18 O'Tooles in the Northern Ireland telephone directory, fewer than half with Belfast addresses; the name, which is clearly meant to be ridiculous, has given offence in the Republic, where that sort of thing isn't considered funny. The 'plot', an almost impenetrable intrigue to bring about the end of strife, is of little consequence, merely a device enabling Morrow to introduce as many and varied Belfast types as possible.

A curious attribute of these characters, and a clue to the author's literary ancestry, is their datedness. Consider, for example, one Cooney, who wears 'an off-white slouch hat, double-breasted pinstripe, black shirt and white tie, like an extra from *Guys and Dolls*'. Yes indeed – there is more of Damon Runyan (and Raymond Chandler?) here than of any Irish author I can think of. The street-life, the wisecracking, the sense of everybody being on the make and having his price, belong to an American period genre, not to Irish literature at all: and in this respect Morrow both captures and personifies a certain kind of Belfast type (Morrow has been a shipyard worker, furniture salesman and insurance agent) for whom music is jazz (not folk) and the world's capital not London (and certainly not Dublin) but a sort of generic American sidewalk lined with art-nouveau milk bars and two-tone convertibles. These imaginative properties belong to a generation that remembers 'the War' and the GIs; and the most damaging criticism to be made of the novel is that for all its hilarious observation, or fantastication of contemporary detail, the atmosphere is that of an earlier time.

Still, the details are often ingenious, especially when informed by Morrow's unclouded vision of human nature working in tandem with his gift for burlesque:

> Little old ladies passed townwards, shopping bags abrim with incendiary devices for planting in stores where they owed money. The postman staggered from door to door with his usual load of intimidating letters . . . which each recipient had posted to himself to boost his position on the new housing list.

Another criticism to be made is that, in its careful lack of discrimination (religious), the novel sacrifices verisimilitude for the sake of community relations; it offers us, if you like, the fictional equivalent of the despised banality, 'one side's as bad as the other'. But then, it isn't really about the Troubles at all, but about a Belfast that no longer exists; laughing gas for a terminal patient.

Best Irish Short Stories 2 is the second anthology of recent work edited by David Marcus, the principal Irish champion of the form. There are 14 pieces here, some by established authors like Jennifer Johnston, John McGahern and William Trevor, but most by little-known names like Gillman Noonan, Ita Daly, Sean MacMathuna, Kate Cruise O'Brien and Clare Boylan. Mr Marcus, in his introduction, remarks that 'the collection for the most part reflects a country being rudely awakened from a long sleep of unquestioning conservatism'; and certainly there is a great deal less of the Frank O'Connor parish-pumpery that used to be the norm. An old-fashioned quality persists in Noonan's 'God and Ye Olde Curiosity Shop', in which the son of a sophisticated, fast-living, blithely pagan mother asserts his independence by taking Holy Orders (C of I); in Ita Daly's 'The Lady with the Red Shoes', which records the observations of an old fogy on holiday in a demure country hotel; and in Sean MacMathuna's 'A Straight Run Down to Kilcash', where a farmer's son is expelled from boarding-school for having an affair with a kitchenmaid. Perhaps the most interesting stories are by Kate Cruise O'Brien and Clare Boylan, both born in 1948 and both evincing liberated sensibilities: Ms O'Brien in a caustic study of two young people locking themselves into a foredoomed marriage, and Ms Boylan in a lynx-eyed description of an old school pals' (female) reunion lunch. The interesting thing about these two writers is that they are not recognisably Irish at all: their stories might be taking place in any 'advanced' society.

Ian Watson, winner of the British Science Fiction Award for *The Jonah Kit*, comes with the recommendation of no less an authority than J. G. Ballard, who describes him as 'the only British science fiction writer of ideas'. If this is true it's unfortunate, for his latest isn't remarkable for its originality. *Alien Embassy* is a rewrite of *Brave New World* and *1984*, except that the protagonist is a black girl instead of a white man. There are flashes of talent here, as in a description of coconuts as 'little skullfuls of milk' and of a hen that treads 'pedantically' a winding bicycle track. But, as an imaginative proposition, the book might have profited from its own prescription: 'The function of art is to be an effective focus for the mind. Not a distraction, a frivolity.'

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Jonathan Raban

Magazines: Angling Man

There's always a pleasant feeling of truancy involved in sidling past the *New York Review of Books* to pick up the latest issue of *Trout & Salmon*. The cover alone is pure turn-on: a quarto-sized colour glossy of some heroic fellow in bottle-green waders up to his thighs in a sparkling mountain river. His rod is usually arched, and if you look closely you can see the swirl of a great tail in the broken water ahead of him. For me, as, I imagine, for the majority of the magazine's readers, these pictures offer a monthly fix of mythology. Our own fishing isn't quite like that. We are much more likely to find ourselves *sans* waders, *sans* rocks, *sans* tamarisk, *sans* waterfall, standing in line on the banks of an artificial lake, hauling out tame rainbow trout which were put in there by a fish-farmer the day before yesterday.

Fly-fishing, more than most traditional English institutions, has undergone a spectacular change in the last 25 years. When I was a child, it was the solitary pastime of the gentleman. Trout streams – at least in the south of England – were fiercely preserved for the use of colonels and rear-admirals with rheumatic twinges and ancestral cane and greenheart rods. I remember them crouched in the willow-herb – gruff, uncommunicative men on the run from wives, drawing rooms and trespassing small boys. Then someone discovered that the rainbow trout has a stunning 'conversion ratio': you feed it half a pound of protein and it converts it into flesh like something from a slimmer's nightmare. If cows had the conversion ratio of rainbow trout, they would be as big as suburban villas and beef would be about 5p a pound.

The effect on trout fishing was to turn it from an obscurely genteel rural sport into a substantial industry. All over England, people started to transform unproductive patches of cow pasture into holes in the ground; they put water in the holes; they put rainbow trout in the water; and then they sold season and day tickets to the gathering mob of anglers who were discovering that not only were rainbow trout a lot better to eat than roach and bream and chub, they were also a great deal easier to catch. Fishing for farm-fed rainbows is only a little more difficult than, say, stalking cows or going on a hen-shoot. What makes it different is that it is so richly steeped in lore and rhetoric, and *Trout & Salmon* is there to sustain the mythology while fly-fishing itself is going through its own industrial revolution.

There is a standard angling prose which every fisherman will recognise: a nostalgic jumble of W. H. Hudson, Richard Jefferies and the *Boy's Own Paper*. *Trout & Salmon* is deliciously soggy with the stuff:

> Like a giant necklace, a thousand glittering droplets torn from the surface hung on for an instant against the golden backcloth of the setting sun. Time and again the fish bored deep, now a slow relentless force, now tearing line from the reel in long runs of uncontrolled fury . . . but I knew, and maybe the fish did, too, that it was now only a matter of time . . .

I have to admit that Gordon Mackie on 'Where The Rainbows Dance' caused even me to feel a slight twinge of embarrassment, but I fell for W. B. Currie on 'Ways of the Sea-Trout: some angling tactics based on typical fish-behaviour patterns' –

> Then the moon appeared and I found myself shortly after midnight standing on a boulder above the slow head of a large pool. I looked up and saw the infinity of sky with the moon floating in it. I looked down at the water and saw the same scene reflected. I was standing between sky and sky. Was I weightless in space?

Now there, as Eliot said of that dead sound on the final stroke of nine, is 'a phenomenon which I have often noticed'. But the best-written things in *Trout & Salmon* hark back to Walton and Gilbert White – bits of exact amateur natural history in which fish and insects turn into well-observed humanoid characters. In *The Compleat Angler* Walton vets each species like a complacent old clubman spending an afternoon mulling over the Candidates Book: 'And you may take notice, that as the Carp is accounted the water-fox, for his cunning; so the Roach is accounted the water-sheep, for his simplicity or foolishness'. Here is Neil Patterson on the subaquatic excursions of the olive spinner:

> The female spinner lands on a post, a sedge stalk, bridge support, or some other obstacle sticking out of preferably crystal-clear, fizzy, well-aerated water. She then presses her wings together and crawls down beneath the water. As she does so, the surface tension pushes her wings against her body trapping the lifebuoy of air she'll use to return to the surface.

I have myself observed (if less acutely than Mr Patterson) the habits of female spinners in places like the Gay Hussar and the Zanzibar; and I can vouch for his accuracy.

Half of *Trout & Salmon* is a museum in which old-fashioned styles like these are lovingly preserved; the other half is a locker-room full of racy technocrats arguing about the merits of the latest sort of carbon-fibre rod or whether one ought to clean one's fly line with dioctyl phthalate or 'a medium-chain alkyl-polyester'. A Welsh tackle-dealer advertises something which is 'not so much a net as a landing system', and every month there's a newly invented knot or fly or method of casting. Trout fishing used to be done on rivers and natural lakes with rods made out of wood and 'flies' which were imitations of real insects or minnows. It's now done in reservoirs and man-made ponds with rods of glass and carbon and flies which resemble nothing in nature and have names like 'Baby Doll', 'Appetiser', 'Jersey Herd' or 'Trout Pellet'. If a structural anthropologist wanted a textbook set of Nature/Culture oppositions, he could do worse than look at the language of fishing; and the general tone of *Trout & Salmon* falls into the uneasy no-man's-land between William Boot's 'Lush Places' column for the *Daily Beast* and a civil engineers' trade journal.

Sometimes this uncertainty makes a splashy rise to the surface of the magazine. In the June issue, a reader ended his impassioned letter in defence of silk lines dressed with linseed oil with this sentence:

> Plastic lines, like nylon monofilament and rods of glass-fibre, carbon-fibre, and reinforced plastic, are products of modern consumer-orientated technology – a technology which has become incompatible with the world of nature in which we live, move, and do our fishing.

The world of nature in which that particular reader lives and moves is in fact Hampstead; and it is difficult to gauge exactly how he intends the word 'we' to be stressed. The final clause should probably have been re-jigged to read: 'we who do our fishing are the sort of people who live and move in the world of nature.' It's not true, but it is an untruth of such potency that no amount of fish farming and carbon fibre will seriously weaken its conviction. Every month, *Trout & Salmon* beguilingly subordinates its new-world technology to the myth of its cover-photos showing rugged Hampstead-men alone in the wild grappling with their prey. And when even graphite, the 4X cast and the Baby Doll fail, the Eagle Star insurance group can help:

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> providing cover in Scotland to fishermen against deficiency in rainfall leading to exceptional low water conditions. For a premium of £12.50 the policy would provide a payment of £100 if the weekly aggregate rainfall is under 0.30in. Reduced benefits apply where rainfall is between 0.30in and 0.75in.

And you cannot say fairer than that, unless, perhaps, you are Garcia Tackle Ltd, advertising flip-up sunglasses, indispensable for anglers: 'when changing flies, knotting casts or when going into shaded areas and beneath trees. Invaluable when focusing camera to record your catch.'

'O, Sir,' said Piscator, 'doubt not but that Angling is an art!' There will be no room for doubt on that score when, thanks to *Trout & Salmon*, I hit Surrey next season in my Aqua-Mate flip-up shades, my cover-note safe in my wallet, my tanned wrist flexing a nifty, 2oz Hi-Flyte carbon job loaded with an AFTM 6 shooting head and my collapsible landing system swinging from my belt. Stripping in a Baby Doll of white chenille, I'll be more than an artist; I'll be Performance Art, and perhaps I should write in to 105 Piccadilly for a grant to prove it.

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Television

Julian Barnes

Double Trouble

Francis Kilvert had a dream this week in *Kilvert's Diary* (BBC-2). He dreamed about two dogs coursing hares. Each dog had only one eye, and so could only see the hare that the other dog was coursing. Both hares escaped; both dogs knocked their heads in against a wall. An apter simile for *The Russell Harty Show* (LWT) and *Parkinson* (BBC-1) could scarcely be imagined: both charmers, this week, received the faceful of brick while their hares escaped at an amble. Harty came to grief with Becky Yancey, a Colonel Sanders Southern blonde who was Elvis's secretary for 13 years. Every single one of his questions (15 or so) she rejected as being misconceived. The more Harty tried to portray Elvis as a gross, nocturnal, pill-popping, junk-food-scoffing recluse, the more Becky denied it. 'He was normal. He weren't perfect, he was jest nearly perfect.' Why did he withdraw? 'He din't withdrawer.' How did he look when she last saw him? 'He looked good.' What about the mystery of his death? 'Elvis died a natural death. He died of a heart attack. We all die. Know what I mean?'

Harty by this time looked as if he knew only too well. Much shaken up, he wheeled in the three Douglas-Home brothers, who sat like the three wise monkeys, innocent of evil. But trouble comes in different forms. Harty's more familiar tuft-hunting style – 'You all have one thing in common: you all come from a smashing family' – didn't exactly relax the amiable buffers. Alec told the one about the caterpillars being left behind at Brown's Hotel and his father forwarding them to Eton in a taxi. Henry, the birdwatcher, tried manfully, but bungled most of his stories. William, the playwright, clearly believed that about £4 a word was the right fee for him. There was a lot of 'Do you know the story . . . ?' 'Oh, the one about the owl?' – and then William would naughtily suggest that Henry tell it. Harty at one point burbled in, 'Oh I *do* love story-telling like this. I *shouldn't* have interrupted.' And then Henry bungled another.

So it looked odds-on for Parkinson to win this week by the length of several velvet bow-ties; after all, he was fielding as 'very special guest' a 'superstar' making his debut in a talk show after 40 years in the business – Perry Como. The reason for his delayed debut, however, soon became clear: he's got a smart manager. 'Were you a good barber?' Parkinson wondered. Como put the nail of his index finger between his teeth, puckered his crows' feet engagingly, paused for five seconds (this one could go either way): 'I think so.' He proved the sleepy, pauseful vacuum most of us had suspected for the last 40-odd years; and the only thing that made you want him to go on singing was the fear that he'd get back to pausing. Parkinson, who can find humanity in any man as long as he's a working-class sexual Stakhanovite, failed even with his standard ploy: 'You come from a poor background.' 'I'd say middle class.' 'But you were one of 13 children?' 'I'd say that makes it middle class.'

The best use of television's money this week was *World in Action*'s report on the 'justifiable homicide' of Liddle Towers (Granada). Sober and queasily convincing in its use of reconstructions, its arguments for public inquiries into the case and into the Northumbria Police were very solid. Complaints against the force are 20 per cent above the national average, and increased last year by 27 per cent; yet Merlyn Rees believes that 'police forces should only be investigated on bigger issues'. Obviously, the Northumbria Police haven't killed enough people yet. The Home Office must work on the driving-test principle of ignoring the first jerky start, the first missed hand-signal, and so on: it's only the second homicide that counts. One thing, though: I wouldn't be PC Goodrick on a dark night in Newcastle at the moment.

By contrast, the money spent for the results obtained in *Horizon Special*: *The Case of the Ancient Astronauts* (BBC-2) was a baffling waste. An hour and a half of expensive, world-wide location shots, all to disprove the 'theories' of Erich von Däniken, an eager-eyed, vigorously self-deceiving Swiss loon who believes the Earth was once visited by extra-terrestrials who mated with us and passed on intelligence and technology. Given ten minutes on his own, Von Däniken would have auto-destructed: when asked why he claimed to have explored caves he had never set foot in, he answered, 'In the popular books genre the author is allowed to use effects.' Instead, we had a cumbersomely sneering text by Graham Massey, plus rationalist explanations from archaeologists who often seemed as cracked as Von Däniken himself. Maria Reicher, for instance, has spent 35 years staring at dusty lines in the Peruvian desert. Now if we all took over our standards of rationality from her . . .

But whom are we to take them from on the box? Certainly not from Frank Bough, currently the screen's finest irrationalist, a man skilled at using cheerfulness to cast out reality. It's not hard to imagine him announcing the sinking of the *Titanic* as a 2-1 defeat for the lads, who had fought all the way and next time round would be sure to pick themselves up off the mat and give that foreign iceberg a kicking. The trouble is, they seem to be breeding more of his sort all the time down at the BBC. Try to imagine Frank Bough *in utero*, and what do you get? Tony Gubba, of course. And Tony is learning the trade fast. Standing in for the almost entirely human Barry Davies on *Match of the Day* (BBC-1), he yelped on about scoring feats unequalled since at least the previous Saturday, and climaxed, 'Two doubles in today's games: Gordon Hill scored *both* goals in Manchester United's 2-2 draw with Queen's Park Rangers, and' (here a hideous twinkle crept into the Gubba eye, as if he knew we'd appreciate the wit of his linkage) 'John Radford sustained a *double* fracture of the jaw in West Ham's one-nil defeat by Leeds.'

Tone, of course, is everything. You can make a dog roll on its back with pleasure by whispering encouragingly, 'Filthy Rover; really disgusting, horrible, nasty Rover . . .' – and you can do much the same with the average *MoD* addict. So eager are we to believe that what we are about to watch (or, even more pathetically, *have* just watched) is a great game, that we refuse to credit the evidence of our senses. When the Rabbi told us before the Bolton-Spurs match to 'watch out for the really explosive ending', even a Rugby League forward would have understood him to be saying, 'This pretty scrappy match will be decided in the 89th minute by a single score coming from a goalmouth hog-up'. But all to no avail. The rodent Motson, who has really made the number-one shirt his own after some off-the-ball stuff with Barry Davies (Barry has ever since worn that green jacket – a cry for help if ever I saw one) shrilled and shrieked with his usual insight: 'And what a turning-point that might prove to be!' he carols as a goalkeeper goes about his normal duties. It's hard to feel true fear at the reported return of David Coleman as long as the Rodent continues in his present form. I wonder if he's worked out his *mot* of the other week: 'Aston Villa are a coming side in every sense.'

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Kilroy was Here?

Talbot's Box *Royal Court*
Playpen *Theatre Upstairs*
Molly *Palace, Watford*

The last putative saint I saw subjected to theatrical scrutiny was John Ogilvie, the Elizabethan Jesuit claimed by some to have stretched down a hand from heaven and magicked away a dying Scot's terminal cancer. The dramatist's conclusion, as I recall it, was that he was actually a dangerous fanatic who wilfully refused to recognise the good sense of those unluckily obliged to martyr him: the sceptical 20th-century point of view, very much what one should have expected to hear voiced in that most rational of 20th-century institutions, the Edinburgh Festival. But *Talbot's Box* began life in Dublin, a hotly disputed play from a city still inclined to take the hereafter as seriously as the here and now; and it stops well short of a similar blasphemy. The author, Thomas Kilroy, lets rip with his irony and his bright vaudeville style when he tackles those presently promoting or resisting the canonisation of the drunk-turned-mystic, Matt Talbot: the Irish theocracy which sees him as a 'model of Christian obedience, to fight off false doctrines, subversive influences and dangerous and foreign practices'; the rich and propertied, anxious only to propagate his unprotesting humility, his apparent contentment with his social and economic lot; the doctors and psychiatrists, smugly dismissing him as 'a waste of a man', proof of their belief that 'the ascetic

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and the alcoholic are one, dipsomania and religious mania two sides of the same coin'. But when he comes to Talbot himself he is altogether less decided: Kilroy Was – well, Hereabouts.

Things might be very different if someone other than Patrick Mason had directed and someone less naturally sympathetic than John Molloy had played the main part. There might be more emphasis on Talbot the class renegade, the sanctimonious scab who spent the great lock-out of 1913 on his knees instead of picketing with his fellow-workers. Alternatively, or additionally, he might be presented as the crazed victim of his appalling background, frantically sublimating the hates, fears and guilts bequeathed him by a sottish, violent father. Mr Kilroy is too wary and questioning a writer to exclude either possibility; but those very qualities do also leave it open to the director and actor to piece together a rather more reverent picture, as in fact they do. Mr Molloy's fractured, ravaged face and rough, creaky voice are the only absolutely and unerringly serious things in the circus ring of the play.

It's a daring performance, but daring in an unusual way. Another millimetre of glazing on Mr Molloy's already abstracted eye, another inch on his hanging jaw or slumped shoulders, and the urban recluse would be promptly transformed into the village idiot. But his physical arithmetic is precisely calculated, and instead of drool and drivel we get an unaffected gravity, instead of simple-mindedness a devastating simplicity. He leaves you feeling that Talbot might have been bizarrely motivated at first and frighteningly obsessed in his later years, but that he did touch levels of awareness closed off to those about him. And even if he wasn't a 'saint', he was his own man, a slave to no orthodoxy, single-mindedly pursuing first-hand solutions to the cosmic chess-puzzles. Whether this is a fairer assessment of the living original than that of Ogilvie, I don't know: it makes a more unfashionable play, but also a more suggestive, resonant and moving one.

No one subscribes more zealously than Heathcote Williams to that part of the folklore of the modern theatre which declares that man is a pure spirit soon adulterated by parents, teachers and their fellow-mafiosi. According to his *Playpen*, a picaresque tale of life from sperm to schoolboy, the trouble actually begins before birth. His little innocent is conceived by morons between TV ads, and promptly finds himself being 'pushed around by DNA landlords and RNA cops'. Even the swim up into the womb is a prolonged struggle with reactionary microbes, out to gobble him up. What hope, then, once he's been delivered by monster-medics, circumcised by predators in hideous masks, imprisoned in a wooden cage from Mothercare, and sent off to be indoctrinated by chalky pedagogues? Surprisingly, Williams relents at this point, finding encouragement in the idea that 'the world-wide community of children is the last remaining savage tribe', worth anthropological study for its anarchic games, songs and rituals; and there his play abruptly stops, out of breath. His tangy language and unruly imagination redeem much, at least for some, but it's hard not to feel glad he's denied us the predictable next stop, the shrivelling of the boy into the adult.

Molly turns out to be Simon Gray's reworking of an early TV play, itself based on the *cause célèbre* recently transformed by Terence Rattigan into *Cause Célèbre*. But the two versions of the Rattenbury case seem more complementary than conflicting because Rattigan concentrates on the court proceedings and the moral shock to genteel Bournemouth, Gray on the misunderstood protagonist's dealings with her elderly husband and boy-lover, the two combustibles whose friction ended in murder. It's an observant, trenchant piece and, thanks to Stephen Hollis's alert direction and Mary Miller's taut playing of the maddeningly seductive Molly, no less exciting than Sir Terence's visit to the Lustgarten.

Opera

Eric Sams

Shreds & Patches

Muzio Scevola *Holywell Music Room, Oxford*
The Magic Flute *Coliseum; further performances 2, 8, 10, 17, 20, 31 December*
Il Trovatore *Coliseum; further performances 3, 6, 9, 15 December*

All these operas began with the fashionable nonsense of their time and place (first performances in London 1721, Vienna 1791 and Rome 1853). According to John Dewey, what endures is 'a substance that can enter into the experience of others and enable them to have more intense experiences of their own'. Perhaps *Muzio Scevola*, although buried for 250 years, can still fulfil that office for some hearers; if so, they can be grateful to Anthony Ford for his scholarly spadework. My own feeling is that last week's concert performance was less a revival than an exhumation. One apparent cause of death was the verbal anaemia of Paolo Rolli, so pernicious that not even copious Livy extracts could save it. The dull Italian libretto suggests a set textbook of Roman history; it was divided into three parts, and handed over to a triumvirate of composers. But the artificial plot could not be turned to any real advantage, even by Handel's Act Three. There is just no life left in the story of the legendary hero who thrust his hand into a flame to show his fortitude.

At the time, Italian opera was all the fashion. Before long the *Beggar's Opera* would laugh such aristocratic pretensions out of court, and restore entertainment power to the native bourgeoisie. Meanwhile John Gay contented himself with a mildly protesting epigram about the diplomatic immunity enjoyed by foreign artists and art-forms –

> Who here blames words, or verses, songs, or singers,
> Like Mutius Scaevola will burn his fingers.

The Oxford Opera Club orchestra played with fire, under the spirited direction of Denis Arnold; and the young professional singers performed with considerable brightness and warmth. I especially admired the eloquence of Patrizia Kwella's Orazio. But the basic material was always wooden and has now petrified; there was little sign of any further kindling.

The Magic Flute poses the opposite problem. It plays so well and enchants audiences so readily that its potentially profound effect on experience can easily be lost in a welter of farce and fun. The safeguard lies in soft-pedalling the stage business and articulating words and music with total clarity. The present production tends to reverse this procedure. Its first flaw is the English translation, which to my ears is full of false quantities. Instead of tripping from the tongue, the syllables sprawl gracelessly athwart the melodic lines. This effect is aggravated by the direction of Lionel Friend, who bustles the work along like a panto, leaving some of the singers rather breathless.

The present production seems designed to make its appeal direct to the audience, without undue deference to the music. Thus in his search for a soul-mate, Papageno (engagingly played by Alan Opie) is required to quit the stage and examine the contents of the nearest boxes. Perhaps these and analogous effects were aimed at the many school parties in the first-night audience. Certainly it is splendid to see young people patronising the opera; but the converse is less agreeable. What in the world can one take seriously, if not children and Mozart? In part compensation we had some admirable singing, for example from John Tomlinson as Sarastro; his performance will grow in stature and gravity as his involvement and confidence increase. The finest redeeming features, in my view, were those of Valerie Masterson, whose Pamina looked and sounded exquisitely convincing, whether in delight or despair.

In *Il Trovatore* too the night was rescued by a lady, for the third successive time. In the presence of Katherine Pring's Azucena the stage lit up. The fiery intensity of her singing was more than a match for its topic, namely the burning of a witch at the stake. At that point the rest of the cast began to believe in the opera; and so, rather more gradually, did the audience, despite the manifold implausibilities of the Romantic melodrama. Its title, the only phrase left untranslated in Tom Hammond's more than competent singing version, means a wandering minstrel, or thing of shreds and patches; like the gipsy costumes of the makeshift plot. The hero Manrico (well sung, especially in the lyric moments, by Tom Swift) is never quite sure whether or not he was burned to death in infancy, in which tragic event he would not be his own mother's son but somebody else's; and this perplexity so confuses his mind that he is inadvertently captured in between acts. Indeed, so much happens to him off-stage that it seemed doubly inadvisable to render his first solo almost entirely inaudible. This distancing effect suggested a troubadour on whose serenading someone had just slammed a window shut; it inhibited the establishment of the character; and it blunted

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the poignancy of a later melodic reprise.

Otherwise all was sweetness and light, as in the singing of Rita Hunter as Leonora, or power and darkness, as in the Conte di Luna of Christian du Plessis. Many of the brightest highlights came from the orchestra, ably directed by Noel Davis. Verdi's splendidly familiar score, like *Hamlet*, is full of quotations. Interestingly, the first notes of the top ten tunes are built up from the common chord, which vividly captures and conveys the common touch. Finally, one spectacular *coup de théâtre* earns a special mention, as the English National Opera's answer to *Salome*. At the Coliseum, a headless corpse is displayed; at Covent Garden, a corpseless head. Can these be the reciprocal arrangements promised at the recent press conference?

Films

John Coleman

Key Haul

Golden Rendezvous (A) *Warner West End 2; ABC Shaftesbury Avenue; Scene 1*
Blue Sunshine (X) and **The Pack** (AA) *Warner West End 3; general release*
Inhibitions (X) *Filmcenta; Classics, Victoria and Praed Street*

If *Ship of Fools* was *Grand Hotel* afloat, then *Golden Rendezvous* is a sort of *Towering Inferno*-cum-*Juggernaut* sinking. To trace the influence at work on this big, idiotic enterprise, ripped from an Alistair MacLean thriller, might prove just the parlour-game appropriate to that somnolent period following Xmas dinner. A raffish gangplank of passengers ('There's enough multi-millionaires aboard this ship to turn Wall Street a whiter shade of pale,' points out First Officer Richard Harris) embarks in South America on the *Caribbean Star*, a cargo vessel unusually luxurious in its appointments. These include a 24-hour casino, snappish young Ann Turkel, signally destined to fall for Harris, and more than several dates with death. Burgess Meredith, who has – unlike his context – a system, gambles steadily away with computer to hand, while John Carradine sits watching and taping the players' conversation. David Janssen, as Miss Turkel's equivocal companion, drinks and drinks and drinks. (Note: anyone not guessing their relationship in the first half-hour is probably right for this movie.) A distraught Dorothy Malone wanders about, emitting little verbal SOS's no one notices. Coffins form part of the cargo. Robert Flemyng, the captain until killed and replaced by Harris with his Tudor hair-style and instant virility, could as easily have died of psychosomatic lockjaw, poor chap. 'Good God, Browning and now Benson,' he quavers. 'What the hell is going on in my ship?'

The question echoed round a giggling auditorium and answer came there none, not then or later. A plot to intercept a bullion boat carrying billions in gold to the US; a nuclear device with a kidnapped scientist to prime it; bullets sprayed like Flit: nothing, at any stage, makes sense. Water, water everywhere, nor any stop to think. There is also a lot of fire and flame about towards the close and a particularly insane moment finds an officer inviting a crew member to put them out, rather as one might have invited a diver to tip the *Titanic* upright. Stanley Price's italic screenplay grows most endearing in such final ejaculations as 'The key! The key!' and, Harris hugging his real-life wife Turkel to him in a freeze-frame, 'All that gold! Wow!' To know the size of the budget for this monument to the non-sequitur could only be painful, but wow indeed.

And so to a couple of relatively low-financed American films, swiftly into the popular domain after showings at the current London Festival. There they formed part of a new section devoted to 'Action Cinema', of which Ken Wlaschin had to say, 'In the so-called "exploitation" area of the market, producers don't mind how much intellectually subversive sub-structure a film has as long as it conforms to the demands of the action public.' Jeff Lieberman (maker of *Squirm*) wrote and directed *Blue Sunshine*, the title of which refers to a variety of LSD taken by a bunch of students back at Stanford University in the Sixties. It is now 10 years on, and ugly, apparently random murders and crack-ups start happening. A fellow goes berserk at a party after losing his unsuspected wig, chucking a girl in the fire and slaughtering two others. Shock-cuts work; the ex-wife of a prospective congressman, who turns out to have been the original pusher, sheds hair too and goes bald-headed after a pair of totties with a large carving knife. I don't know about 'subversive substructure' (the ironies seem pretty laboured), but the ghoulish piece has its idiosyncratic side-virtues: good use of locations (a department store) and some snide and snappy dialogue. 'I'll talk to my lawyer before I talk to you,' barks a pretty lady. 'Darn television shows,' says the cop moodily as she stalks off.

The travelling companion to this, Robert Clouse's *The Pack*, is a load of old straw dogs. The canines in question are supposed to have gone wild after abandonment by their townee owners summering on a holiday island. All credit to Lou M. Schumacher and Karl L. Miller who furnished and trained the slaughtering, rending, snarling pooches. Little elsewhere, and notably not for the strained, 'humanistic' conclusion: last doggie left, a newcomer to the pack, is coaxed back to hand-licking man's-best-friendship via a proffered bickie. *Inhibitions* is a dubbed Italian sex rubbish, shorn of 22 minutes, about a rich widow with a lousy past, now free to indulge herself in Tunisia. Five out of ten for some lesbian fragments: full marks for this worldly restaurant exchange – 'May I suggest a shrimp cocktail?' A scurrying proprietor restores sanity: 'May I introduce Count Belamore? He's a gourmet.'

Clive James

Neither one thing nor the other

Sometimes I think perhaps I'm just obtuse.
Noon yesterday I took a turn through King's.
The crippled physicist came whirring by,
No doubt preoccupied with cosmic things.
I stepped aside. Above us in the sky
A burping biplane shook a glider loose
Whose pilot, swerving sunward, must have felt
As overwhelmingly at liberty
As this man felt pinned down. Was that right, though?
To lie still yet see all might feel more free
Than not to know quite why you're free to go.
The chair hummed off. The glider made no sound.
If I can't fly, why am I not profound?

Weekend Competition

No 2492 **Set by Al Fresco**

Sumo wrestling has been defined as 'the survival of the fattest'. Other one-line descriptions of any sport or game, from French cricket to Cluedo, please. Maximum of six goes; by 16 December.

Result of No 2489 **Set by E. O. Parrott**

We asked for punk versions of *Rule Britannia* and other traditional ditties.

Report **by The Lemon Kid**

I put the lemon on Lonnie Vermin, easily our vilest contestant this week. I can't even hint at what his entry was like, I'm afraid. Recently, in my capacity as cultural trouble-shooter for the complex, I attended a punk party (with a nappy-pin through my nose), among whose guests were numbered Sid Vicious, Vince Violence and a certain D. Generate. Vicious, as it happened, was booted out within seconds of his arrival (by an NS contributor, I'm proud to add): he didn't mind in the least, of course, and applauded the ejection even as he tumbled down the stairs. They aren't *really* violent, needless to say; why, I could carve a more mettlesome crew out of a bunch of bananas. Maximum gracelessness is their sole and modest aim, and one faithfully reflected by the few printable entries we received. £6 apiece, but no Partridge. You wouldn't

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know what to do with it, and, besides, I suspect Towling already has one.

Some talk of Punks like Georgie Git, Vic Vomit, Les Latrine;
Of Groups like 'Crabs' and 'Supershit', 'The Dildoes', 'Clap', 'Yobscene'.
But of all your foul and filthy freaks there's none that can compare
With the wham-bam-slam-bam-scram-mam Splat! of us lads in 'Pubic Hair'.

We've raped five nuns, three peeresses and one expectant mother;
And on the road between the gigs we gaily screw each other.
For of all your penile pistoleers there's none that can compare
With the quick-flick-slick-dick-lick-dick Splut! of us ginks in 'Pubic Hair'.

We tint our thatch a tasteful puce – or else bright tangerine;
With acid in our orange juice we can act sodding mean.
And when it comes to 'bottling' Fuzz there's none that can compare
With the crash-bash-clash-lash-smash-gash Sploing! of us guys in 'Pubic Hair'.

TERRY TOWLING

On the air, on the stage
Full of puke and piss and rage,
And the squelchers go stomping along.
With a jeer, with a sneer,
With a mutilated ear,
Yes, the squelchers go stomping along.
For it's hi-hi-hee,
You can be as rich as me,
Pile on the evil hot and strong.
Shout and shock, play bad rock,
Gnash your teeth and show your cock,
Oh the squelchers go stomping along.

BASIL RANSOME

There's a disco in the town, in the town,
Where Fetid Freddie drops 'em down
An' 'he plays 'is drum wiv the action of 'is bum,
While snarlin' foul obscenities.
Wiv a pin stuck in 'is 'ooter
'E goes bombin' on 'is scooter
Rahnd the disco when 'e's full of purple 'earts.
Up you! Up you! you gits Up you! Up you! Up you!
I 'ang abaht the women's loo,
An' I nick their drawers wiv me dirty filthy paws,
When they come in to do a pee!

GERRY HAMILL

Smack up your grandma, she's an old fat bag –
Be vile, vile, vile!
While there's a pussy that you'd like to scrag,
Defile, yobs, that's our style!
What's abuse? – It's the in-thing;
Banned records make a pile.
So, whack up your grandpa till you make him gag
And spew out bile!

FRANK ANDERSON

There's a mortuary next door,
Nelly Dean,
Where they'll shove you in a drawer,
Nelly Dean;
When I've eat your brains for starters,
And I've used your guts for garters,
I'll be red in tooth and claw,
Nelly Dean.

There'll be lots of lovely gore,
Nelly Dean,
When they scrape you off the floor,
Nelly Dean,
Of all the draggy brasses,
With slack and saggy asses,
You're the one I most abhor,
Nelly Dean.

RODDY REDDING

Tony Miles

Chess

No 61 **October Problems**

Of the October problems 54 and 55 were completely straightforward. Only 56 **(1q5K/7p/6pQ/p5Pn/2B5/4p3/KPP5/8)** caused any disagreement .After 1 . . . Q-N1! 2. B x Q, K x B followed by P-K7-K8, 2. K-N3, P-K7, and 2. P-N3, Q x B; 3. P x Q, K-N1! are all clear-cut. White can offer more resistance with 2. P-N3 (or K-R3/R1/N1), Q x B; 3. Q-B8ch, Q-N1; 4. Q-K7. However, although black is cramped, I cannot agree that this position is other than won. The simplest winning procedure is 4 . . . P-R3 (to create some breathing space) 5. P x P (inevitable) Q-Q4 when the black pieces quickly become active and the passed NP is decisive. Alternatively, against 2. K-R3 he can continue (Q x B; 3. Q-B8ch, Q-N1; 4. Q-K7) Q-N1 (threatening Q-N5ch) 5. Q x P (or 5. K-R2, Q-B5) Q-N6 winning, and against 2. K-R1 or N1 he can consider 2 . . . Q-N2 followed by exchanging queens and N-B5, though 2 . . . Q x B is probably easier.

The simplicity of the problems produced an enormous number of prizewinners, namely Messrs Burn, Garfath, Kastanas, Kwiatkowski, Kyprianou, MacLean, McSheehy, Neelakantan, Sobey, Southgate, Sahasrabudhe, Taylor, Willmot and Miss Keen (£3 each) with consolation prizes to Messrs Abrahams, Allen and Brown (£1.50 each).

My thanks to Mr A. V. King for pointing out a mistake concerning the Tilburg tournament. In fact the Milan tournament of 1975 was also category 14 and even stronger.

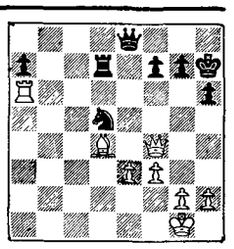
Now one of my better games from Tilburg:

White: V. Smyslov **Black: A. J. Miles**

1. P-QB4, P-QB4; 2. N-KB3, N-KB3; 3. N-B3, P-Q4; 4. P x P, N x P; 5. P-KN3, P-KN3; 6. B-N2, B-N2; 7. 0-0, N-QB3; 8. N-KN5, P-K3; 9. KN-K4, P-N3; 10. P-N3 (if 10. Q-R4, B-Q2!) **0-0; 11. B-N5, P-B3; 12. B-Q2, KN-K2; 13. P-QR3, P-B4; 14. N-KN5, P-KR3; 15. N-R3?! B-N2; 16. P-QN4, P x P; 17. P x P, Q-Q2; 18. Q-R4, KR-Q1; 19. N-B4, P-KN4; 20. N-R5, B-R1; 21. P-R3, N-Q5! 22. Q-Q1, B x B; 23. K x B, QR-B1; 24. R-B1, N-Q4; 25. N x N, Q x Nch; 26. P-B3, R x R; 27. B x R, R-QB1; 28. B-K3, Q-R7; 29. P-R4, R-B7; 30. R-B2, P-B5! 31. B x N, B x B; 32. NP x P, Q-N7; 33. BP x P, B x R; 34. K x B, R-B8; 35. N-B6ch, K-B2; 36. Q-R4, Q-Q5ch; 37. K-N3, R-N8ch Resigns.**

Problem 61

White to play. How should the game go? Answer to me at the NS postmarked not later than 14 December.

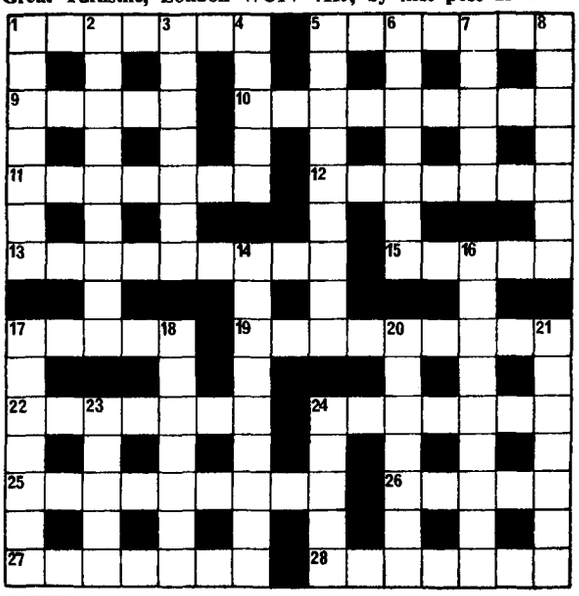


Solution to Problem 59

1. Q-B6! KR-K1; 2. N-Q5! winning material, e.g. 2. . . Q x Q; 3. N x Bch or 2. . . B-B4; 3. N-K3. The game continued 2. . . Q-N6; 3. N x Bch, K-B1; 4. R-R3, Q-N5; 5. B-B4, K x N; 6. B x R and white won.

Weekend Crossword 1244

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1244, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 13 Dec.



ACROSS

1. Venerable star appears in a Bogarde part (7).
5. The resident died before Sam (7).
9. Different so in bed would be worried (5).
10. Holy mothers killed? (9).
11. Material for a sweet ready before the man comes back (7).
12. Following an article I get married to produce life (7).
13. Disease which spoils pride about family line (9).
15. Entitled to reduce slightly the claim returned (5).
17. The car bowls along (5).
19. Shavian hero and about a hundred parts (9).
22. A subject of satisfaction for a writer on sex (7).
24. Possibly art is love and love makes a poet (7).
25. Old star says goodbye with refusal about money (9).
26. Start sleeping back to front in clubs (5).
27. Newly classifies holiday places (7).
28. Birds get nothing back before there is protection for the fruit (7).

DOWN

1. Jeered at when eaten (7).
2. Practice in which one again listens to nearly everything (9).
3. Fix up so the little river flowed in time (7).
4. Language which is masculine in ending (5).
5. Lost hope when Morris married? (9).
6. Joy when the first story comes up (7).
7. The playwright is in when the Lord Chancellor calls (5).
8. Left-wing leader and broadcaster (7).
14. In Carter's place an insect discovers weeds (9).
16. Heavy burden which may be still on me (9).
17. Not die although concerned with the insurance (7).
18. Queer speaker who provides no prose translation (7).
20. Without the bulb the view would be good (7).
21. Partners who give up propitiatory gifts without practical benefit (7).
23. Chaps with beer inside them (5).
24. Everyone is going round to the island (5).

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APEX

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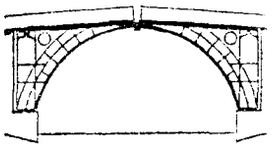

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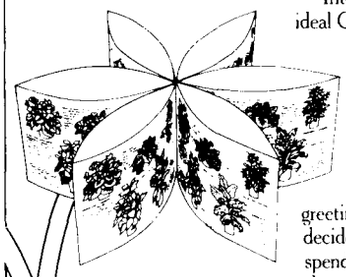

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NEW STATESMAN

Vol. 94 No. 2437

Contents

758 **James Fenton:** Who Are the Men of Destiny?
759 **Roger Omond:** South Africa's Foregone Conclusion
760 **Patrick Seale:** Sadat's Shock Therapy
761 **John Griffith:** An Expensive Umpire
762 **Allan Ashbolt:** Whitlam's Chance of Revenge
762 **Roger Woddis:** Poor Bloody Infantry
764 **Ben Whitaker:** Reverse Injustice?
766 **Profile of Brian Clough**
768 **Anne Bennett:** Kind Hearts
769 **John Mortimer:** London Diary
770 **Jeremy Holt:** Lore College
771 **Arthur Marshall:** Unholy Ghosts
772 **Letters to the Editor**

Books and Arts
775 **James Fenton:** Macaulay
782 **Donald MacRae:** Beveridge and Laski
Other reviews by **John Sturrock, Philip French, Russell Davies, Mark Kidel, Claire Tomalin, Christopher Hitchens, Jonathan Keates, Anthony Howard, Lorna Sage, Valentine Cunningham, Derek Mahon**
791 **Jonathan Raban:** Magazines
792 **Julian Barnes:** Television
792 **Benedict Nightingale:** Theatre
793 **Eric Sams:** Opera
794 **John Coleman:** Films
794 **Weekend Competition**
795 **Chess and Crossword**
Poem by Clive James

Theatres

ALDWYCH THEATRE (Royal Shakespeare Company) 836 6404. Record booking info: 836 5332. 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', Brecht's 'The Days of The Commune', Ibsen's 'Pillars Of The Community'. See daily press for dates and times. RSC also at The Warehouse at Donmar Theatre with: 'Macbeth' (sold out), James Robson's 'Factory Birds', C. P. Taylor's 'Bandits' (both unsuitable for children). Also at Piccadilly Theatre in 'Wild Oats' and Savoy Theatre in 'Man and Superman'.

ALMOST FREE. 485 6224. 'A Pinprick of History' by Margarette D'Arcy. Mon.-Sat. 1.15 p.m. until 23 Dec. (Opening Mon.).

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NATIONAL THEATRE. 928 2252. 'The Plough and the Stars', 'The Country Wife', 'The Madras House', 'Bedroom Farce', 'Sir Gawain and the Green Knight', 'The Lady from Maxim's' 'Half Life', 'Richard III Part 2', 'Motor Car'. See daily press for dates & Times or ring recorded info: 928 2256.

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'THE CLOSED SHOP TYRANNY', talk by Gerald Hartup of the NAFF. London Young Humanists, 13 Prince of Wales Terr., W8. Sun. 4 Dec. 7.30 p.m. Adm. 30p.

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